RECKONING IN YUGOSLAVIA *An Editorial*

NEW MASSES

APRIL 8, 1941
FIFTEEN CENTS

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN COAL AND STEEL

Ed Falkowski's first-hand report of a million men on the move.

THE PEOPLE MEAN PEACE

An appraisal of the anti-war strength of America

NATIVE SON ON THE STAGE

by Samuel Sillen

IS BRITAIN'S GOVERNMENT DEMOCRATIC?

by G. S. Jackson

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Between Ourselves

THE story of NM's art auction this past Sunday begins with the artists. For that is what we remember best: some 200 of America's finest artists who freely contributed their work—and extremely valuable work it is—to help sustain this magazine. Because of them the auction fulfilled its slogan of "Art for Every Pocketbook." The eagerness of the buyers kept the auctioneers on their feet from three o'clock until ten in the evening, when the last "Going . . . going . . . *gone!*" finally sounded. Some of the artists themselves served as auctioneers, among them H. Glintenkamp and Maurice Becker, whose work has appeared in these pages since the very first issues of the old *Masses*. Another contemporary of John Reed who was present at the auction, and whose work brought some of the highest prices, was A. Walkowitz. Practically no one of the crowd that came to buy was disappointed by failing to find the particular piece of art he wanted. Even the children were there, and one youngster proudly walked off with Elizabeth Olds' "Merry Go Round" painting which he had persuaded his mother was just the thing to hang over his bed. Redfield's nineteen illustrations for his story for children, "Mr. His of Histown" (first published in NM), was also bought for a class-conscious nursery.

Jerome Klein, former art critic of the New York *Post*, conducted the auction during the first hour or so, after which he was relieved by Glintenkamp, Becker, A. B. Magil, and Carl Bristel, NM's business manager. So generous had the artists been in their contributions that when the auction closed at ten there were still a number of fine pieces left unsold. So—and here's the good news—with those pieces plus the numerous works promised by artists who couldn't get their contributions to us in time for Sunday's sale, we intend to hold another auction. It will take place on April 17 at 8 PM, and will also be held at the ACA Gallery, 52 W. 8th St., New York City. It will feature works by Art Young, Gropper, Becker, Evergood, Reisman, and many others—including Bruce Mitchell, the Guggenheim winner, who arrived at the auction just too late to have his contribution put up for sale.

The auction was a financial help, too, but the news on the fund drive isn't so good. We got $1,318.96 during the past week, which is a slight improvement over the week before, but we are still $19,022 short of our $25,000 goal. The whole story is on page 13. We'd like to tell you, though, about some of the contributions which came in recently that carried us through the week and also heartened us with some particular evidence of what NM means to its readers. From far-off Puerto Rico, a group sent us $30 with a letter: "These are trying days indeed. A terrible war is going on in its second year and no ruler dares say what the fight is for. Every government is afraid of its own people. They must not know the truth lest they give an about-face and hang all their rulers. But in America it is different as long as you continue serving democracy in its traditional spirit. You are not alone—you will never be alone. NEW MASSES must live to keep America out of this war and to save the Bill of Rights forever. You will find herewith a bank money order for $30—my contribution and that of a number of my friends who enjoy reading NEW MASSES regularly. I sincerely hope you will be successful in your campaign for the $25,000 so badly needed to keep things going." From two other points of the compass, Miami in the far South, and Cincinnati, we received contributions of $100 each, in both cases contributed by groups of the magazine's friends. And then, of course, there are the unspectacular but essential dollars and five from every section of the country which constitute the "mass base" of our support. Please read page 13 carefully—and act on it as soon as possible.

A number of our readers have let us know how much they liked Samuel Sillen's analysis of Sherwood Anderson's achievements and shortcomings (March 25 issue of NM). One writes that "Mr. Sillen not only provides clarity but he has a particular felicity of expression which I have not encountered elsewhere. I haven't his own gift of presentation to describe what I mean, but the quality in his writing which most impresses me is a sort of *luminous* effect. I am also invariably struck by the singularly confident, almost effortless tone of his writing. It must take a very fine understanding to be able to write in this fashion."

And a note of criticism: "Am I wrong in feeling that NM is beginning to skimp a little on the space for literary and 'sights and sounds' material? Heavens knows we can use all the political analysis you can give us, especially these days, but I'd like something more in other fields too: books in particular, theater, movies (awfully important), dance, and music."

A final reminder: NM's next "Interpretation, Please" will be this Friday, April 4, at 8 PM, Webster Hall. Experts include William Blake, Alan Max, A. B. Magil, Philip J. Jaffe, and Joseph Starobin. Admission is fifty-five cents, and a seat in the reserved section can be bought in advance at NM offices, 461 Fourth Ave., the Workers Book Shop at 50 East 13th St., and Bookfair, 133 West 44th St.

Who's Who

ED FALKOWSKI has contributed to NM since it was a monthly. He is a former Pennsylvania coal miner, has worked in pre-Hitler Germany and the Soviet Union, and at present is covering the coal country as this magazine's correspondent. . . . G. S. Jackson is a research worker and a student of economic developments, whose article, "The Real Rulers of Germany," appeared recently in NM. . . . Adam Lapin is NM's Washington correspondent. . . . Frank Spector was a fellow labor prisoner of Tom Mooney and J. B. McNamara in San Quentin. . . . Meridel Le Sueur is a Minnesota writer. She has contributed articles and fiction to many magazines, and is the author of a volume of short stories, *Salute to Spring*. . . . Hugh De Lacy is president of the Washington Commonwealth Federation, and was just elected national chairman of the Committee for the Protection of Foreign Born. . . . Theodore Draper was formerly NM's foreign correspondent. . . . Lou Cooper is a young musician and composer.

Flashbacks

CALENDAR of anniversaries April 4-10: April 4 (1930)—friends of British "democracy," please note—police in Bombay, India, fire on striking railroad men, injuring thirty. . . . April 5 (1915) leaders of the youth of many European countries meet at Bern, Switzerland, to organize resistance against the First Imperialist War. . . . April 6 (1917) Wilson, the "liberal," does it for Wall Street. . . . April 7 (1936) for the first time in American history the organized unemployed attain national unity. This day, in Washington, D. C., the Unemployment Councils and the Unemployed Leagues merge into the Workers Alliance.

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Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification sent to NEW MASSES rather than to the post office will give the best results.

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NEW MASSES

VOLUME XXXIX APRIL 8, 1941 NUMBER 3

WHY LABOR SAID "NO!"

THIS has been a decisive week in the history of America. The employers and the government attacked all along the industrial front, expecting the offense to cripple the mass-production unions, to repulse the CIO organizational drive, to crush the labor movement as a necessary prelude to full participation in Europe's war. Despite the newspapers and pat administration speeches, the attacks had nothing to do with "defense." It cut far deeper than that. In a report on the needs of wartime industry made at the request of the War Department, the Brookings Institution revealed just what was behind the employer-government push: "The cost of living must rise more than wage rates. . . . If this does not happen, it is an indication that the increased effort [of raising production for war] is being wasted so far as the winning of the war is concerned, or that the workers' share of the burden is being shifted to others, either to fixed income classes or larger taxpayers."

Reflect on that statement. What good is war if all effort "is being wasted" by cutting into the incomes of the very wealthy? What use is war if the effort brings only normal profits? The struggle for "democracy" is all very fine, but unless "democracy" pays super-dividends, it has no allure for those who sit in high places. And who, if not the workers, prevent the patriots from knocking the bottom out of living standards?

WHAT HAS BEEN HAPPENING is terribly revealing. Not that the opposition of the largest corporations to the economic needs of the working class is surprising. But to those who look upon the state as a vague concept above everyday struggle, as an impartial arbiter removed from the stress of ordinary life, the fact that the attack on labor was led and directed and planned by the administration itself served to dispel illusions. The administration quite frankly became "an organ of oppression of one class by another," the direct instrument of monopoly.

Nor were the clashes mere skirmishes. The big guns of government pounded at every union stronghold. They are still pounding, but the first assault has failed, and labor can point to substantial gains. Against the Bethlehem Steel Corp.—and steel is after all the key to the mass-production industries—the strikes, deliberately provoked by the corporation's attempt to revive a company union, brought important victories. Of course, the company union had been outlawed by the NLRB. But the corporation refused to acknowledge its demise until all the legalisms of appeal and still further appeal had been slowly and painfully exhausted. In the meantime, Bethlehem followed the honored practice of disregarding the law: "When a lawyer tells a client that a law is unconstitutional," stated a Little Steel attorney in 1936, "it is then a nullity and [the client] need no longer obey that law." The corporation's blithe disregard of court orders was standard employer practice, but it stretched matters a little far when the Bethlehem strikers were denounced by the press for imperiling "defense," while the company's illegal procedure went unrebuked. On the premise that only workers can be wrong, armed police swept pickets off the street, and arrested strikers for the crime of being clubbed. The union's resistance, however, bewildered the administration. Strikers were supposed to capitulate forthwith; instead picket lines reappeared before the mill gates. As a result workers at Bethlehem returned to work, with the principle of collective bargaining affirmed; at Johnstown, they advanced still farther when labor obtained the first written pledge ever given to a union by Bethlehem Steel.

ELSEWHERE, the pattern of government intervention varied, combining violence with the "back to work movement." The police escorted strikebreakers into the plants of International Harvester Co. in Chicago—scabs recruited by top AFL officials over the protests of the Federation rank and file. Again workers were set upon with clubs and gas; an injunction was issued against mass picketing; and again the unionists held out. The strike ended in another labor advance, with the company forced to submit all issues to mediation it had formerly refused.

The most dangerous test came at Allis-Chalmers in Milwaukee, Wis. After a six-week stoppage, the Office of Production Management suddenly announced that the strike was at an end. Secretary of Navy Knox and OPM head Knudsen ordered Milwaukee workers to return to their jobs. "By what power are you and Secretary Knox authorized to issue ultimatums?" Philip Murray, CIO president, asked William Knudsen. "The Allis-Chalmers workers accepted your [the OPM] program. The company refused. Since then the workers have come to regard the Allis-Chalmers situation as a lockout. Why do you not insist upon compliance with your original proposal?"

Yet the government had spoken. By voting to continue the strike despite the Knudsen-Knox edict, Allis-Chalmers workers challenged the right of the administration to disband their union. To have done otherwise, to have complied with the return-to-work order, would have set the precedent so earnestly desired by the administration: that government had only to command and the unions would give way.

The initial attack was met and turned back. Moreover, the defeat of the employers and the administration was far more than an economic advance on the part of labor. On May 1, 1933, Hitler announced: "One must not be always speaking of rights, but one must also speak of duties." In March 1941 President Roosevelt gave notice that "You will have to work longer at your bench, or plow, or machine," for the time had come for "the sacrifice of some privileges." Hitler's "duties" and Roosevelt's "sacrifice" were synonymous: the workers were the ones who must give ground. In *Mein Kampf,* a stress is laid on an Economic Chamber, "to keep the national economic system in smooth working order and to remove whatever defects or errors it may suffer from. . . . Thus, employers and employees will no longer find themselves drawn into a mutual conflict over wages and hours of work." The same words are used to justify the OPM. At whose expense would defects and errors be corrected? In Germany, people's organizations are no more; the standard of living is one of abject misery. And in America? Mr. Knudsen's job is to make sure that "the workers' share of the burden is not shifted" to the rich.

The attack has been ferocious. *For the moment,* it has failed. The next great struggle will be conducted by the United Mine Workers, largest American union, when bituminous miners leave the coal mines until they win a new and satisfactory contract. They are asking higher wages, a guaranteed 200-day work year, safety provisions in the mines, improved conditions of work—a restatement of demands common to all workers. It is the central demand: government by corporation now recognizes it as endangering excess profits, limiting the already astoundingly high take of the industrialists. John L. Lewis' union enters the new battle strengthened by the brave struggles that have already occurred in other industries. In turn, success for the miners will fortify all labor.

The unions today stand between the American people and the disaster planned for them by the administration. Rumor grows stronger that President Roosevelt will soon seize extraordinary emergency powers. His angry Jackson Day speech pointed in that direction. Coercion through police violence, the OPM, injunctions, failed to accomplish their purpose of blotting out organized labor. Emergency powers can provide still other weapons. Never before has the solidarity of labor, and the full support by the people of the labor movement, been more crucial. And never has such unity promised more.

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IN THE KINGDOM OF COAL AND STEEL

Ed Falkowski's firsthand report on a million men in America's basic industries. How they live, how they work, what they're thinking—and what they're doing. The truth behind the headlines.

Fairmont, West Va.

IN THE mining towns of western Pennsylvania and in this section of northern West Virginia "wartime prosperity" has brought back an old-fashioned glamour to Saturday night life. Collieries are operating full blast, some of them seven days a week; the miner's free day is being staggered so as not to impede the flow of production.

But thousands of miners remain idle. Fairmont, Morgantown, Clarksburg, and other West Virginia coal centers are filled with unemployed, one-time miners who still get up at whistle-time unable to suspend a life-time of mine discipline. They spend their days aimlessly sauntering about the streets hoping to find a job at one of the outlying pits.

In this segment of northern West Virginia, one of the richest coal-producing areas in the world, more than 7,000 miners have been displaced in the past three years by machines. Coal production has been stepped up. The Grant Town mine of the Koppers Coal Company, a major bituminous producer, reduced its working force from 1,400 to 600 since 1939. Output remains at 8,000 tons a day. The Risville mine recently dismissed 500 men; 350 others were forced to go from the New England mine; Mine No. 8 and No. 9 released 400 men each. This is but a small idea of what is happening in every mine in operation today.

"The rumors that machines are coming make every man sick," a miner told me. He stood six feet tall, wide-shouldered, muscular, a Hercules of a man. But he is 47. After 45, a man hereabouts is no longer "employable." He is denied a doctor's slip for the physical examination. "The company feels it can drive the younger men harder. Old miners have a set pace and they resent the impudence of bosses. The machines are all in the hands of younger men."

You meet the ex-miners in desolate beer parlors holding empty glasses and waiting for something to happen. What? No one knows. After a life-time spent in the same community they find it impossible to shift to some other place. And besides, where is a man to find work? Everywhere machines are purging mines of miners, jarring local communities with their devastating economic upheavals.

This state's 104,000 miners produce some 108,500,000 tons of soft-coal a year. The coal industry has brought fortunes to its owners. But the towns and camps are crowded with idle miners who move about towndumps picking and sorting rags and bottles for sale as junk, treading the well-known path to the relief office where flint-faced officials are immune to their plea for help.

"I was best loader in my section, damnit," says an old miner. He wore his working-clothes although he had lost his mine-job some three years ago, one of the first casualties of the new loading machines. "It take good man to shovel twenty ton. I make twenty-five and one time twenty-seven ton, by God. Boss say, 'Good man! Best man I got!' I work hard. At quittin' time I feel like I drunk. I no can carry tools out, by God. I too weak. But I load coal!

"One day Big Boss come, say, 'John, take your tools home today.' I know for what he say that. New machine comin'. I work thirty-seven year in that mine, damnit. I say the boss—'I no take my tools out, by God, no. I stay. I help make this mine.' And I say myself maybe I should kill boss now? Why not? I feel I want to kill him. I no care much for what I do just then.

"He see I serious. He say, 'Good, Johnny. You stay. Go on day-work for company.' I stay. Two months later mine shut down. Stay shut for six months. When it open, everyone must go for physical exam. I strong like horse but I 52 years old. No have job for me in mines any more. I old. I don't know what I do now. Maybe rob, maybe kill. I don't know. I got to live anyhow. Maybe war come, kill younger men. Maybe old men get work then. I don't know, by God!"

Every miner will tell you the story of a champion loader in these Monongahela valleys known as "Steamshovel." No one could come up to his tonnages. He was a proud athlete of the pan-shovel. His thick muscles did him no good when the machines came. And "Steamshovel" who at one time had made big money, was too proud to beg. He was found one day in one of the abandoned coke-ovens on the outskirts of Fairmont's slum "Shagtown" district, dead from starvation.

I visited the coke-ovens, a row of brick bee-hives converted into cell-like huts. Each abandoned oven contained specimens of indescribable misery. Men who had spent anywhere from twenty-five to fifty years of their lives in the mines now looked out at me with pleading expressions. It seemed odd to them that someone should be interested. They have grown used to human callousness.

Some of them asked me to take down their names and help get them pants, shirts, shoes —particularly shoes. They need them in order to resume job-hunting as soon as the weather gets warm enough to allow a man to spend nights out-of-doors, for the mines are far away and traveling money more than scarce.

Relief? Four dollars a month from the state of West Virginia plus a few grapefruits and a sack now and then of graham flour or corn meal. Several of the oldest miners have qualified for old-age assistance under the social security act. These receive the munificent sum of ten dollars a month. One of the men, the "Mayor of Coke-Ovens" gets only nine, a dollar having been lopped off as a penalty for getting himself into a fight. He implored me to try to locate for him another pair of underwear. The only tattered pair he owned he was wearing at the time and they badly needed washing.

What about the miner still enjoying full employment? Mining machinery has inaugurated a new regimen of speedup. The seven-hour day is figured from the moment a miner begins actual work. Time spent in coming and going in the gangways between workplace and shaft-mouth is not reckoned. It is not unusual for a miner to spend anywhere from 11 to 13 hours underground, though his working hours may not be more than seven. One day-shift miner informed me that he had had to start for work at 4:30 a.m. in order to get there by 7. Another, on night-shift, said he began work at 9:30 but was inside the mine by 7:30. "It takes a full two hours to get to my work place—about four miles from shaft-bottom."

Every miner was ready to pour out his bitterness at the violence the machines are working on their bodies. Here was a young miner, 24, broad-shouldered, his muscles almost bursting through his skin. "Yes, I'm a strong, husky fellow, but do you know that by the end of the shift I can hardly drag myself home again? The job takes all I've got. It's killing work. And the only reason why I do it is because there ain't nothin' else in these mine-camps. All I ever knew was coal. . . . I get seven dollars a day flat. Men used to get fourteen and fifteen dollars a day for the same tonnages at one time. . . . I spent six years in the pit now and I'm just about where I was the day I started!"

Money is scarce in the mining camps. Company scrip—a currency of copper and brass bearing the imprint of the coal company—is circulated. A miner in need of credit applies at the company office for scrip against current earnings. Scrip is redeemable at full value only in company stores—"rob-stores," they are known locally. On paydays the miner receives what is left after the value of scrip advanced to him has been deducted plus other deductions for house-rent ($2.25 a month per room), coal, light, doctor, burial fund and other items. Sometimes his pay is completely "scripped out" and he receives nothing but a blank statement to this effect. At local stores scrip is received at a 25 percent discount. The company itself takes a similar discount where the miner wants to transfer a sum of scrip back into cash. The union is trying to dissuade miners from using scrip. But families must be fed. And credit in a

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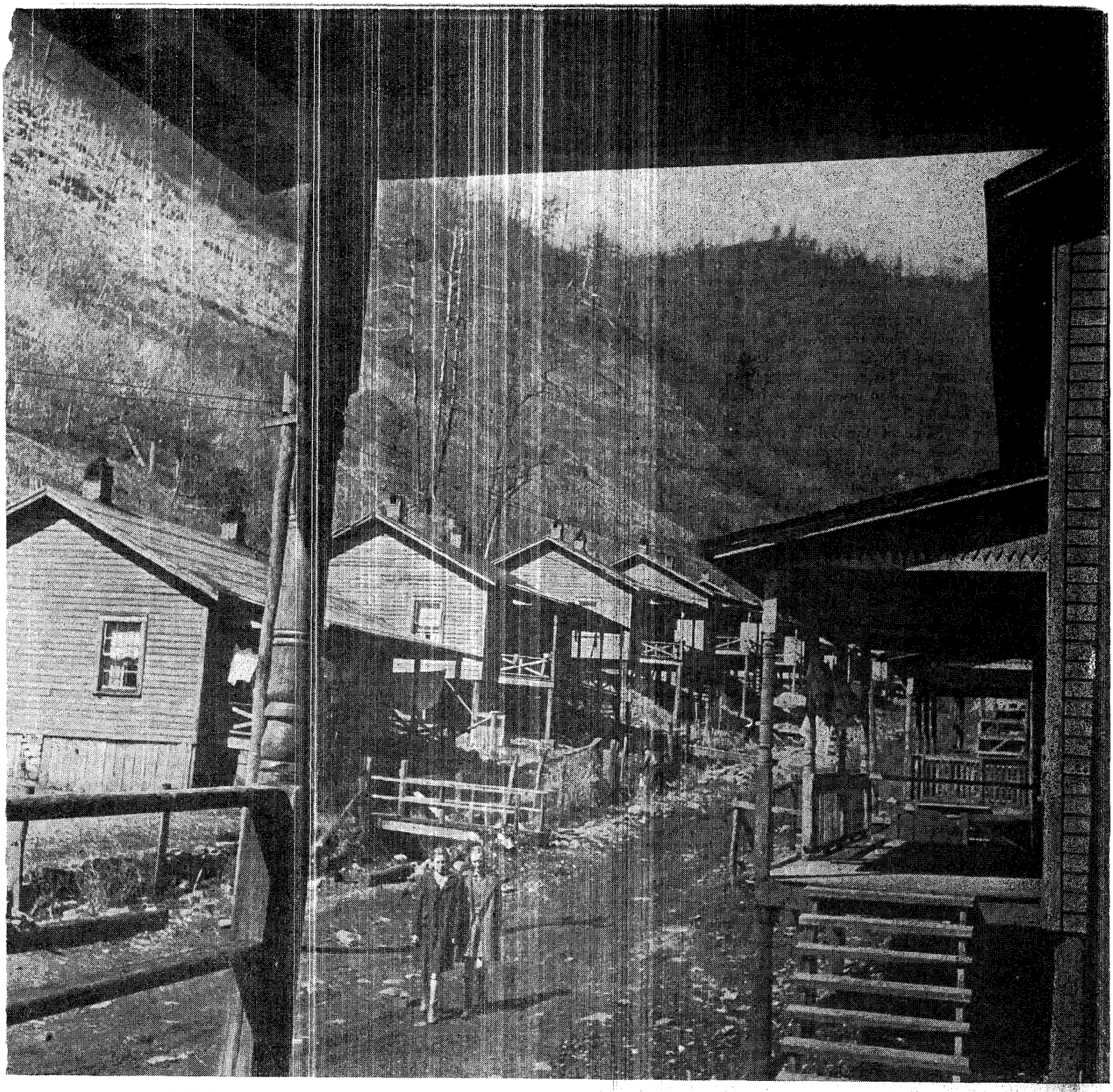

MINERS' MAIN STREET: THIS IS HOME TO THE FAMILIES OF NEARLY 600,000 AMERICAN MINERS.

mine-camp is difficult to obtain. Furthermore, the company itself keeps tab on the amount each employee spends in its local stores where prices are above those prevailing in town. A lax spender will be visited by company men inquiring into his spending "delinquency."

Today union-meeting notices may be seen posted on bulletin boards at colliery entrances. Union buttons are worn. There is a checkoff. But the experiences of non-union years live on. In these steep, yellow-creeked valleys with their sudden rows of paintless wooden shacks the war for unionism was incredibly grim.

Barracks were thrown up on the hillsides of Grant Town and at the Dakota and other mines. Machine gun nests were planted. Company guards paraded night and day, armed to the teeth. At night powerful searchlights swept the camp to spot suspicious movements. Union organizers were shot on sight. Every night two or three local men were killed by guards. There was no law.

Union men were evicted from company houses, their furniture piled high on the territory of the baseball diamond which is not company property. There the winds and the rains had their way with them. At the mines tonnage rates on loading fell from 55 cents a ton to 22 cents (they are 65 cents today); you worked any hours the boss imposed. You were in the mine by six a.m. and you were often still in the mine by two the next morning. You needed a company permit to enter and leave camp, the company having built fences around the property. The first thing the union did when it came back was to compel the company to take down the fences. And the militants of the union have since tried to build homes of their own on the surrounding hillsides to free themselves of coal company intimidation in the future.

It is the union that is credited with being

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the bringer of a new light into these valleys. With a union behind them, the men are less afraid here among these tall, lonely hills where the company once had them at its mercy. In Grant Town a song is still sung about a local union martyr killed in 1922 by the gunfire of company thugs:

"George Kello he is free
And he died for you and me
Sure as the world goes round. . . ."

The struggle for organization still goes on in West Virginia. Only the other day Tony Teti, president of District 31 of the United Mine Workers, was threatened by a vigilante group when he tried to organize the Mabie Mine in Randolph County. At the J. G. King Brady Mine of the Elk River Coal and Lumber Company a company union has been formed to fight the UMW. This company recently fired seven of its veteran miners for refusing to work in a place they considered unsafe. Mine inspection in this state is in the hands of political appointees. Mine accidents jumped from 13,780 in 1938 to 16,503 last year. Unsafe machines and speedup are to blame. But coal companies consider mine safety a forbidden luxury. Human life comes cheaper under the modest compensation laws of the state than do mine improvements.

As miners follow negotiations now under way between coal operators and the union, they feel it is not so much a question of whether they have grievances to bring up as of which grievances are to be central issues. Every housewife is full of complaints about rising living costs: groceries, movies, clothing —everything going up. Rents are mounting: thirty dollars for a three-room flat in Fairmont is not uncommon. Landlords prowl about nowadays figuring how to jack up even these figures. In the Dakota Coal Camp —the Dakota mine is a captive operation turning out coal for Bethlehem Steel—it is the same story. Every mine one stops at, from the suburbs of Pittsburgh down through the Mahoning country of Ohio and southeastwards into West Virginia, reveals a similar complex of grievances having to do with the elementary right of the miner to existence.

The union has won out in these areas but new and ominous problems loom. Most important is that of the effects of the machine on jobs in bituminous mining. In asking for a shorter workday, for more pay, and for paid vacations the union is seeking a partial answer. To the miner the present negotiations are not large abstractions or dry recountings of statistical data but matters of life and limb, of heart and spirit. Even the remotest mine camp is militantly aware of that.

Bethlehem, Pa.

I RUSHED down here to Bethlehem from Youngstown. Later I want to tell about the steel mills of the Ohio valley. But first let me glance hastily at this great struggle.

Hundreds of cops and state police in full war equipment of riot sticks, tear gas ejectors, and guns, on horseback and in police cars, have closed in upon this little city. The maneuver suggests a military occupation. And the 18,000 striking steel workers of Bethlehem Steel are getting a taste of "democracy" as the employers conceive it.

The issue is simple. Is Bethlehem Steel bound by laws passed by the US Congress? Has it the responsibility to abide by the decision of the National Labor Relations Board, which after long hearings in 1939 declared the corporation's Employees Representation Plan to be a company union and ordered it dissolved? The corporation says, in effect, "No!" It has appealed the decision to the United States Supreme Court; meanwhile, it contemptuously ignores any restriction placed upon it by the government and the law. And when the ERP moved to conduct its election on company property, with ballot boxes draped in American flags, the SWOC issued a strike call.

Repercussions spread with lightning speed. Gov. Arthur R. James rushed hundreds of state troopers to Bethlehem. A "committee of public safety" gathered—consisting of local and state police officials. Military men arrived to review the situation.

Police massed around the plant gates to clear the way for scabs moving to the plant in cars—a few hundred, perhaps even two or three thousand—estimates vary. But no smoke came from the smokestacks, the mills remained quiet, with most of the men outside the gates, massed in the streets, thousands of them, confronting the hard-faced troopers detailed to guard the plant against the "enemy."

The police fell upon the pickets with clubs, guns, and tear gas, beating women and children. Van A. Bittner, chief of organization of the CIO, claimed the company planted provocateurs among pickets to throw stones at cars and in other ways to create a pretext for police attacks. The results reenacted the old brutal days when the Pennsylvania Iron and Steel police clubbed and killed.

But in answer to attack, picket lines grew larger hourly at each new outburst of unprovoked violence from police and company guards. Union officials notified the state police that the union would maintain a picket line at the gates "by force, if necessary." Major Joseph Martin, commander of the state police barracks, seeing the mood of the strikers, gave ground, and the SWOC picket line again marched in front of the mill gates.

Back of the strike lies an ugly tale of grievances common to all steel workers. Bethlehem Steel officials have always been hardboiled. During the first world war the company profited by at least $25,000,000 by refusing to take government contracts except on terms which were later described by a federal judge as follows:

> [Bethlehem Steel] boldly and openly fixed the figures in the estimated cost so high as to give a promise of large bonus profits. The managers of the [U.S. Wartime] Fleet Corporation protested it. The reply was: "We will take this contract with the promise of bonus profits incorporated in it, but not otherwise. Take it or leave it."

Over a twenty-year period, the corporation insiders voted themselves over $36,000,000 in bonuses in addition to salaries. Last year, Eugene Grace, head of the company, received $1,628,000 over his salary. And that same year, the company made a profit of $48,677,524, twice as much as it had in 1939.

But workers don't share in the banquet. Their pay has been consistently below the scales paid in other competitive plants. Only the threat of strike persuaded the company to establish a $5 minimum in certain departments which came under the provisions of the Walsh-Healey act.

That is where the ERP came in. The company carefully kept it alive—for future use against the union. No steps were taken following the NLRB decision to carry out the provisions of federal statutes. True, the company instituted a "bonus" system—but it was so tricky that Philip Murray, head of the CIO and the SWOC, recently attacked it as a device to evade the wage-hour law.

A month ago, the SWOC struck at the Bethlehem plant in Lackawanna, New York, protesting the discharge of 600 men, followed by the suspension and dismissal of another 1,000, for union activity. In two days after 12,000 workers walked out, the Lackawanna officials capitulated. "This is the beginning of the end of tyranny, of spies, of espionage," declared a CIO spokesman. "For the Bethlehem Steel Co. is the spearhead of every non-union interest in America."

At Lackawanna, the corporation was proved not to be invincible. At Bethlehem, workers have refused to take abuse any longer. In Johnstown, in Sparrows Point, Md., in Steelton, other Bethlehem workers are growing restless. But now they are watching their fellow unionists at Bethlehem. For their fight is crucial.

They say down here that the SWOC has just begun to fight.

Youngstown, Ohio.

EVERYWHERE the mills are enormously busy. At all hours, there is a sawing of metal, a chatter of sirens, a huff of engines in the air. And all this means work, wages, what the Chamber of Commerce likes to call "revived prosperity." The lone newspaper of this Mahoning Valley city reports new furnaces operating in the valleys farther down the river; it tells of mills operating at capacity; of profits doubled and then doubled again; of dividend payments soaring; of better, more efficient machines being installed to cut labor costs and again to increase profits.

But mill workers are not talking about a glorious future. Living costs are rising all too quickly. The housing shortage is ever more serious—and landlords are jacking up rents in anticipation of a golden harvest. For the shacks in the shadow of the mills, for the broken-down, smoke-painted frame huts, that lie in the shadows of the brooding mills, a

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worker must pay from twenty-five to thirty dollars—and prices are rising. "More than a week's work just to pay the rent," the workers complain. And their wives speak bitterly of mounting costs of pork, eggs, and butter.

GRIEVANCES are widespread and deep rooted. The workers have had enough of the "cooling off" period since the unions were wiped out with blood and violence in 1892 and again in 1919. The time has come for the "reheating" of old anger. They grow impatient at conciliatory gestures toward the companies; time after time, they refuse to wait for company-granted conferences, walking out of the plants and tying them up. In Niles, Massillon, Newton Falls, Warren, Canton, where Little Steel's empire extends in Ohio, there is resolve that the blotting out of unions just being formed—as happened in 1937—will never be repeated. This resolution is fortified by reports of fantastic war profits that fatten the companies. But while Tom Girdler of Republic Steel collects $176,000 a year, wages remain stationary, and the new machines crowd more and more on to relief. Insufficient funds mean that many of the 12,000 who need food and rent money go without, and the pennies are spread thin for those lucky enough to get any help.

Is it any wonder that the steel worker today worries incessantly about his own future and that of his family? Or that he begins to insist upon a bigger share in the defense profits? He can no longer look with confidence to his own economic future; to him the present alone matters. For when the present emergency passes, it will be too late for even minimal demands.

What does he want? A pay boost of ten cents per hour; paid vacations, effective after one year of service instead of after five years, as at present; exclusive SWOC bargaining rights, tantamount to union recognition; a measure of control over working conditions.

In Aliquippa or in Warren, in Wheeling or in Bridgeville, his grievances are everywhere the same. Every lodge room echoes with the complaints of heaters and scarfers and chargers over the matter of varying rates for the same job, with resentment at having physical examinations imposed, with unfair dismissals of other workers. Companies resort to a practice of paying incentive rates to pacesetters as a speed-up device. Three men performing identical work may be receiving three different rates of pay. In part, these varying rates on standardized operations stem from 1937 when a blanket ten-cent per hour increase was added to then prevailing scales, a matter never since then readjusted. The sum total of all these multifarious abuses comprises an explosive situation.

The steel worker no longer considers himself a serf in a feudal domain. The SWOC is but one manifestation of his developing sense of emancipation. There was a time when James Crawford, burgess of Homestead, could say: "If Jesus Christ himself asked a permit to speak in here he wouldn't get it!" Organizers were spirited off to jail or flailed by town police. Free speech was high treason. Terror stalked in these smoke ridden towns strung along the Monongahela and Allegheny and through the Valley of Big Steel.

Today SWOC organizer John J. Mullen is mayor of Clairton, and John Maloy, another SWOC organizer, is burgess of Homestead. SWOC lodge rooms are everywhere new social centers in the communities. The old fears have gone; everything is "union." The men take pride in their union; they feel it is invincible.

Their deep sense of grievance is kept alive by the policy of the companies. Time-study men figure new labor eliminations; the ten-shift stretch continues despite the forty-hour-week provision; safety rules are hardly enforced; seniority rights are ignored; consideration of grievances is postponed until a pressure breaks into spontaneous strike action. This is what happened at the Brier Hill plant of the Youngstown Sheet and Tube recently; after the three-day strike was won, the union reported a sudden boost in membership. In plant after plant strikes have had some measure of success—and union rolls have swelled.

Back of it all is the uncertainty of the job itself. The new electric-operated Irvin Works in Clairton is a forerunner of technological changes bound to reduce employment. At Clairton, a handful of men does the work of twelve strip-mills; New Castle, Vandergriff, and other former mill communities have been transformed into ghost towns. The Carnegie-Illinois Co., operating this model plant, has clung to a policy of ignoring older workers and hiring raw inexperienced youths at wages below those prevailing in the older and less profitable mills! The monotony of work soon affected the workmen; the SWOC reports considerable progress of organization in the plant. "Alcatraz," the new works is known locally; some call it "The Big Morgue." A strike at this plant several weeks ago built the union in what was considered an impregnable fortress of the open shop.

"You can imagine how serious our grievances have been when we decided to strike in the coldest month of the year," said a striker at the Universal Cyclops plant at Bridgeville, Pa. "Outside agitators?" he laughed at the suggestion. "Why, our strike has been backed by the oldest workers in the plant. I've put in twenty-three solid years of my own life into it and my friend put in seventeen. . . ."

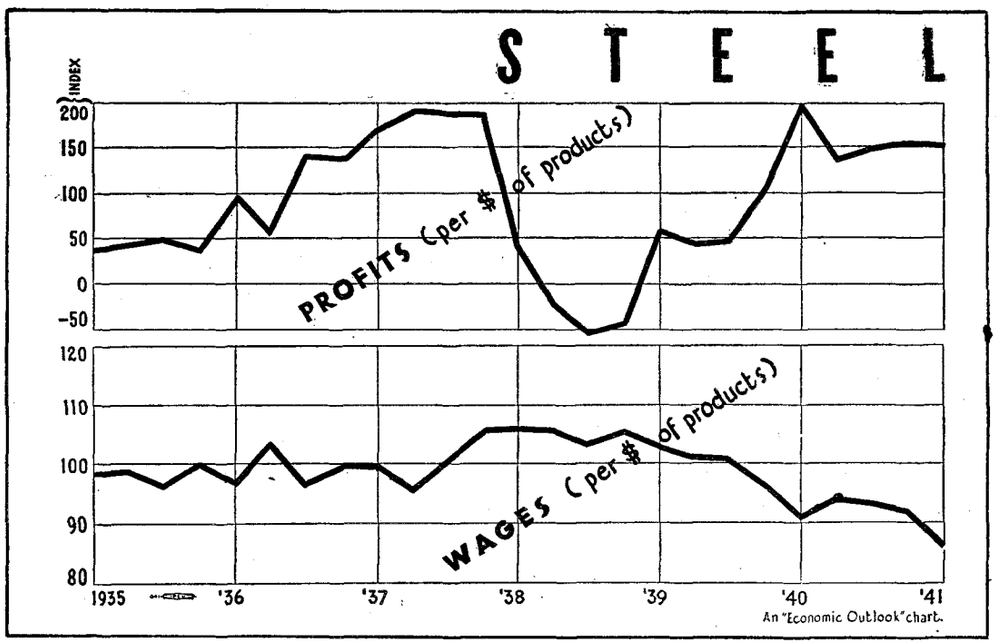
"It's my children I'm thinking of while I'm out on strike," commented another, indicating the struck plant with the stub of an amputated finger. "I don't want them to be up against what I have all my life. . . ."

"Why have you struck?" I asked a worker at the Parks Crucible plant in Pittsburgh.

"The men had grievances, wage rates and other things. They don't want to wait till April 1. They want a raise now—right away—"

As reports emerge from the conference rooms where SWOC and US Steel discuss the terms of a model contract, more than 500,000 steel men watch and wait. They are prepared for any action, action proportioned to the size and resources of their antagonists, the rich and powerful owners of the steel empire.

ED FALKOWSKI.



Roads that never meet. This chart issued by the CIO Economic Outlook *indicates how, for the last two years, profits per dollar of steel shipped have risen while wages have declined. It has been estimated that if steel continues to operate at the rate of the last quarter of 1940, the industry will make profits of twelve percent. The steel workers' wages could be increased by ten percent in 1941, and the industry's profit rate would be reduced only to nine percent. A six-percent profit would be available if wages were expanded by twenty percent. Substantial wage increases can be made in steel, as in many other major industries, without a rise in prices.*

Please turn to page 13

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IS BRITAIN'S GOVERNMENT DEMOCRATIC?

G. S. Jackson turns the spotlight on the British Cabinet. Churchill, "the great democrat," played a leading role in breaking the general strike in 1926. Records of the reactionary thirty-one.

Is Britain worth fighting for? Of course, the people of England are worth fighting for, but so are the people of Germany, India, or Japan. It is not the people of a country who declare a war, but their governments; and it will be for the government of Britain, therefore, that Mr. Roosevelt may compel us to fight.

Since the war started there have been many changes in the English government. The Labor Party, for example, which opposed the reactionary Chamberlain regime has joined the Churchill Cabinet, and the Labor leaders say that not only must Hitler be defeated and the "spirit of tyranny with all its barbarities" crushed (Arthur Greenwood, *Why We Fight—Labor's Case),* but, "we must look forward to a society that is rid of the twin pests of extreme riches and extreme poverty" (Herbert Morrison, New York *Times,* Dec. 12, 1940) and that "by helping to organize victory now, it (the Labor Party) has a great opportunity to win power for socialism once the victory is won." In the meantime, "Labour expects an agreement with India . . . a new approach to the problem of Soviet relations . . . and large scale reforms *during the war"* (Harold Laski, the *Nation,* May 25, 1940).

Ten months have now passed since Labor joined the government, and there has been no agreement with India—only continued imprisonment of her leaders; nothing new in Anglo-Soviet relations except attacks on Soviet trade with the United States and South America; and no serious domestic reforms, but on the contrary, measures like the conscription of labor which intensify the workers' servitude to capital.

Who are the members of this government which is supposed to be paving the way to socialism? Twenty-one of the thirty-one members of the immediate government, that is, the inner War Cabinet plus the other ministers, are members of the Conservative Party, the party of wealth, empire, and reaction. Out of the thirty-one, seven are peers, five are knights or baronets, two are army officers (in England a sign of high birth), and six are closely related to peers. Besides this, fifty percent of the thirty-one in the immediate government have been company directors, and another fifteen percent are closely related to directors. But only 0.1 percent of the electorate are directors. In all fairness to the principle of representative government in England, we must hasten to say that "for the first time in many years the twenty dukes in Parliament (highest aristocracy) will be represented in the Cabinet" (New York *Times,* Feb. 9, 1941). The Duke of Norfolk, acting for the dukes, is now Joint Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. As one of England's biggest landowners, he will be able to apportion agricultural subsidies with utter disinterestedness.

Not only are the members of the English government predominantly reactionary, but even the labor members have no record of devotion to socialism, as they claim. Of the seven labor members, all except Bevin served in the two MacDonald Labor governments. The first Labor government in 1924 fell in less than a year; it behaved no differently from its Conservative predecessors. The second Labor government had a longer trial—from 1929 to 1931. On the positive side of the ledger, this government had a record in India of bombing open towns, of terrorism, and mass imprisonment of the Indian people. Taken one by one, the members of the British government present an even sorrier spectacle from the point of view of democracy and socialism. Of the inner War Cabinet, five out of eight are Conservatives.

Winston Churchill, Conservative, Prime Minister.

Sir Kingsley Wood, Conservative, Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Ernest Bevin, Labor, Minister of Labor.

Anthony Eden, Conservative, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

Lord Beaverbrook, Conservative, Minister of Aircraft Production.

Sir John Anderson, Conservative, Lord President of the Council.

Major Clement Attlee, Labor, Lord Privy Seal.

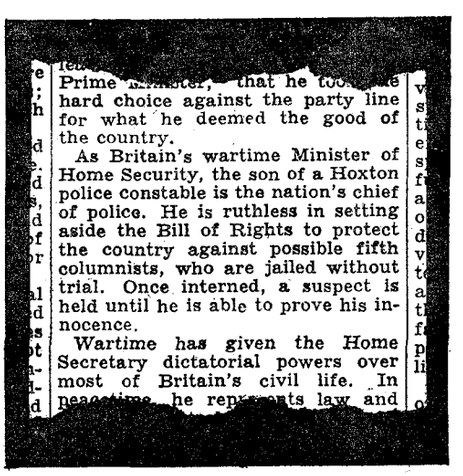
Arthur Greenwood, Labor, Minister Without Portfolio.

Churchill is the son of Sir Randolph Churchill, grandson of the Duke of Marlborough, and cousin of Viscount Wimborne, head of the powerful Guest family which has extensive banking and heavy industry holdings in England and the empire. Among other things in a long and unsavory past, Churchill was one of the foremost proponents of armed intervention against Soviet Russia after the last war. As Minister of War, he was responsible for keeping an English army stationed in Murmansk and Archangel long after the Armistice, for aiding Generals Wrangel and Golovin of the czarist forces, for shipping over 100,000 tons of war materiel to the Siberian Armies in 1919 alone, and for attempting in 1920 to organize a military alliance between France, England, and Germany for the sole purpose of making war on Soviet Russia.

In 1926, Churchill, then Chancellor of the Exchequer under Baldwin, played the leading role in breaking the great general strike. While peaceful negotiations between the government and the labor representatives were in progress, and before a general strike had been called, Churchill saw to it that posters declaring a national emergency were printed and that troops and armed constables were sent to all parts of the country. When the general strike was finally forced upon the reluctant Trade Union leadership, of which Ernest Bevin was a member, it was Churchill who ordered the mass arrest of strikers, took over the radio to tell the British people that a bloody revolution was upon them, and printed scurrilous attacks upon the unions in the *British Gazette*—a sheet which he personally issued when all other papers were struck.

Continuing his anti-social career, Churchill, along with Beaverbrook, led the Conservative Party in its refusal to grant Dominion status to India in 1930-31. This was the period in which the "Labor" government bombed Indian towns and put Gandhi and thousands of his followers in jail, but was at last forced to agree upon "round table conferences" with Indian leaders. Even this slight concession, however, was too much for Churchill, who advocated a policy of "blood and steel" and urged the complete crushing of Gandhi-ism. The *Nation* declared at that time (Sept. 13, 1930) that Winston Churchill's "coming to headship of Great Britain would be a tremendous misfortune for the British people and a menace to the peace of the world."

ERNEST BEVIN, now Minister of Labor, likewise played a shabby role in the general strike. First he attempted to reach an agreement with the government over the heads of the striking miners. When the miners refused to accept the terms—less pay and longer hours—and the Trade Union Council was forced to declare a general strike, Bevin did everything possible to sabotage. Finally,



Prime [illegible] that he too [illegible] hard choice against the party line for what he deemed the good of the country.

As Britain's wartime Minister of Home Security, the son of a Hoxton police constable is the nation's chief of police. He is ruthless in setting aside the Bill of Rights to protect the country against possible fifth columnists, who are jailed without trial. Once interned, a suspect is held until he is able to prove his innocence.

Wartime has given the Home Secretary dictatorial powers over most of Britain's civil life. In peacetime he represents law and

From the horse's mouth. This clipping from the New York Times *(March 11, 1941) appeared in the early edition and was deleted from subsequent editions.*

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after a great deal of negotiating with the Baldwin government, he signed a contract calling off the strike without consulting the membership of the unions, without making a single gain for labor, and worse still, without getting guarantees that the workers would be rehired without discrimination. The result, as everyone knows, was disastrous to English labor. Furious police assaults upon strikers went unpunished, blacklists were the order of the day, employers refused to fire scabs, thus turning formerly closed shops into open shops and forcing returning workers to sign no-strike agreements. A month or so after this shameful betrayal, Bevin wrote in the Transport Workers' magazine, the *Record,* (May-July 1926): "We have lived through a wonderful period and we have no regrets."

The Bevin who now so relentlessly pursues the imperialist war hesitated to support the Spanish people's war, refusing to act against the Chamberlain-Blum non-intervention policy, because, he said, "to oppose it would be to bring the downfall of the Socialist government of Blum who supported it" (quoted by Alan Hutt in *Postwar History of the British Working Class*).

Sir Kingsley Wood, Chancellor of the Exchequer, is the senior partner of the law firm of Kingsley Wood, Williams, & Co., a past director of the Wesleyan Methodist Trust Assurance Co., Ltd., and member of the National Insurance Advisory Committee. Besides being a member of Insurance Directorates and advising the government on insurance matters, Sir Kingsley has acted as attorney for a number of insurance companies. He was first Minister of Health, then Secretary of Air in the Chamberlain government, and was closely identified with the pro-fascist appeasement policy.

Anthony Eden, now Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, has been depicted as a staunch opponent of fascism. It is true that he opposed Hitler's expansion at British expense, but according to Frederick Schumann (in his book *Europe in the Eve*) who strongly supports the Anglo-American side in the war, what Eden wanted was Nazi expansion at Soviet expense. Eden is of gentle birth, son of Sir William Eden and descendant of the first Baron of Auckland. According to his biographer, A. C. Campbell, the Eden family, "like the Habsburgs consolidated their good fortune by judicious marriages." Eden himself, in the best family tradition, married the daughter of Sir Gervase Beckett, owner till his death in 1938, of the Yorkshire *Post,* director of the Westminster Bank (one of England's Big Five), of the Westminster Foreign Bank, and the Yorkshire Conservative News Co.

Lord Beaverbrook, Minister of Aircraft Production, who is said to be second in command to Churchill himself, is one of the financial giants of England. Beaverbrook made a fortune of a million pounds in Canada, and owns, among other papers, the *Evening Standard* and the *Daily Express.* These papers have always been assiduously devoted to the spreading of reaction. Beaverbrook supported Franco, declared the partitioning of Czechslovakia might be the best means of preserving peace, and developed an interest in stopping Hitler only after Germany agreed not to attack the Soviet Union.

Lord President of the Council, "ruthless" Sir John Anderson as he is popularly called, is best known today as the originator of the unsafe Anderson shelter. In the past he has been "policeman" of Ireland during the struggle of the Blacks and Tans, and was a prominent appeaser in the Chamberlain Cabinet. Before he became a Minister, he was director of Imperial Chemical Industries, Ltd. (ICI), Vickers, the arms trust, and the Midland Bank (another of the Big Five).

RECENTLY the Laborite, Arthur Greenwood, Minister without Portfolio, was given the job of finding "a policy for the years immediately following the war." (New York *Times,* Jan. 7, 1941.) Greenwood is superlatively fitted for the job. During the last imperialist war, which he considered quite as democratic and world-saving as this one, he wrote an article about the peace that would follow the war, suggesting such brilliant revisions of the social system as "repair as far as possible the damage done by the war." Of course, he remarked casually, the people will have to "consume less food, wear less clothes, and consume less luxuries" and by increasing labor's productivity, he went on, "the method may well be illustrated by Mr. Taylor's own example" (the Taylor speedup system, no less!)—the country could be rebuilt. (Greenwood, *Aspects of the War,* London 1914.)

Like Greenwood and Laski, Clement Attlee, Lord Privy Seal, thinks that it is "unwise" and "obviously impossible" to formulate the government's war aims "at this stage" (*War Comes to Britain,* 1939). Attlee has, however, made clear that as far as the oppressed colonies are concerned, his position is thoroughly imperialist. In *The Labour Party in Perspective* (1937) he wrote:

> Over a large area the peoples are not yet ready for self-government, and in these territories the Labour Party considers that the British Government must act as trustees for the native races.
>
> The Labour Party has always fully recognized the right of the Indian peoples to govern themselves, but it has recognized that the problems involved in developing self-governmental institutions in a great continent inhabited by peoples who differ in language, race and creed, is no easy one. . . . There is no particular gain in handing over the peasants and workers of India to be exploited by their own capitalists.

This is the familiar position of Social Democracy, a position which Lenin time and again exposed as imperialist and reactionary to the core. Attlee's solicitude over preventing the Indian workers and peasants from being exploited by their native capitalists is truly touching. Rather than subject them to this fate, he would have them exploited by the more tender-hearted British bankers and industrialists who are, incidentally, the main prop of the Indian capitalists. In this way he attempts to cover up the elementary axiom of democracy—let alone socialism—that no people can free itself from its own oppressors so long as it is bound by foreign oppression.

Next in importance to the Ministers of the War Cabinet are those of the newly created Production and Import Committees. Their activities parallel those of our OPM, and they have received sweeping powers.

The personnel of these committees is as follows:

IMPORT COMMITTEE

Sir Andrew Rae Duncan, chairman
Lord Beaverbrook
A. V. Alexander
Capt. Oliver Lyttelton
Lord Woolton

PRODUCTION COMMITTEE

Ernest Bevin, chairman
Lord Beaverbrook
A. V. Alexander
Capt. Oliver Lyttelton
Sir Andrew Rae Duncan

Sir Andrew Rae Duncan, besides being the head of the Import Committee and Minister of Supply in the Cabinet, is chairman of the executive committee of the British Iron and Steel Federation; formerly he was chairman of the Central Electricity Board, vice-president of the Ship Building Employers Federation, and director of ICI. Not much socialism in those activities.

Rt. Hon. Albert V. Alexander, a Laborite, now First Lord of the Admiralty, was First Lord in the second Labor government (1929-1931). During Alexander's tenure, the London Naval Conference was held, and the results which he and MacDonald were instrumental in obtaining were hailed by the Conservative press. According to the New York *Times* (Mar. 4, 1931), "the imperialist *Daily Mail* joined the chorus of praise, the latter commenting that it (the agreement) was 'one of the most splendid achievements since the armistice.'" When Alexander became once again First Lord, the New York

Clinton

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Times (May 12, 1940) recalled his services and commented that "conservatives admit he did a good job."

Lord Woolton, Minister of Food, is another member of the Import Committee. His concern for the masses of England is likely to be tempered by his own financial interests, for until his appointment in 1940, he was director of some fifteen companies, chairman of the Retail Distributors Association, chairman and managing director of Lewis' Ltd. (drygoods), Lewis' Investment Trust, and Pryce Jones Ltd. (drygoods); president of the Drapers' (drygoods), Chamber of Trade, and director of Martin's Bank. The People's Convention of Great Britain is pressing for his removal from office, since he cannot be expected to lower prices when he himself benefits by higher ones.

Capt. Oliver Lyttelton, the last member of the Import Committee, is also president of the Board of Trade. Captain Lyttelton's heart is really in the right place in this imperialist conflict, that is, on both sides of the Channel; one purse in England and one in Germany. Besides his directorships in Metallgesellschaft AG and Norddeutsche Affinerie of Germany, Lyttelton holds enough directorates to net him 20,000 pounds in fees alone! Lyttelton's interests, which are chiefly in metal concerns, stand to gain by war.

AMONG THE OTHER important Ministers of the outer Cabinet is Lt. Col. Leopold Amery, Secretary of State for India, of whom H. N. Brailsford, "liberal" and apologist for the war, wrote in the *New Republic* last May: "I dare hope from Mr. Amery a fresh start in dealing with India. He has no equal in the Commons for courage and his quick and exploring intellect." The "fresh start in dealing with India" Brailsford expected from a man whose chief interest lies in exploiting British colonial possessions. In 1940, Amery was director of sixteen companies, some of which are the Youanmi Gold Mines, the Mercantile Overseas Trust, and the South West Africa Co. Ltd. He was also chairman of the Gold Exploration and Finance Co. of Australia, the Mt. Magnet Gold Mines Ltd., and president of the Trust and Loan Co. of Canada. Amery and his class have a large stake in the British empire and in the British system of colonial exploitation, and they are fighting the war to preserve that stake.

Another prominent member of the government is Lord Cecil (Viscount Cranborne's new title), Secretary of State for the Dominions. He has often been called Eden's "Foreign Office twin," and indeed his career parallels Eden's. He, too, is of noble birth, heir of the Marquess of Salisbury, landowner and head of the Cecil family, and he, too, complemented his own heritage by a "judicious marriage" with a daughter of the Cavendish family, one of the three great families who have ruled England for over 300 years.

Captain David Margesson, Secretary of War, has, according to the New York *Times* (Dec. 23, 1940), a "reputation for autocracy and reaction," and has been through the years that he has served as Chief Conservative whip, a "terrific power behind the scenes." He is the son of Sir Mortimer Margesson, director of the British Colonial Provision Co. Ltd., the Central Coffee (Nairobi) Estates, Ltd., and the East Africa Estates, Ltd.

The three so-called Liberals of the Government are Viscount Simon (Sir John), Lord Chancellor, Man of Munich and shareholder in Imperial Chemical Industries; Ernest Brown, Minister of Health, formerly Secretary of Labor under Baldwin and Chamberlain, spokesman for the Chamberlain government and opponent of the forty-hour week; and Sir Archibald Sinclair, Secretary of State for Air, and former leader of the opposition. Sir Archibald owns a very liberal portion of land—100,000 acres, probably among the ten largest holdings in England.

Lord Moyne, Secretary of State for Colonies, will be more easily recognized under his family name of Walter Edward Guinness; he is the son of the Earl of Iveagh, a director of Arthur Guinness Son, and Co., brewers. His brother, the present Earl of Iveagh, chairman of the corporation, and Viscount Halifax, married sisters.

Robert Hudson, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, is the son of R. H. Hudson, soap manufacturer, whose firm was recently amalgamated with the giant Lever Brothers Unilever. An article in NEW MASSES of June 20, 1939, revealed that Lever Brothers, whose American subsidiary manufacturers Lifebuoy, Lux, Spry, and other products, had close Nazi connections. Hudson inherited 150,000 pounds upon his father's death a short while ago.

Then there is Lord Hankey, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, who was a member of the anti-Soviet Allied Commission in Poland in 1920. Ronald Cross, Minister of Shipping, who it is rumored may be replaced by Lord Beaverbook shortly, is a merchant banker, and a director of Horrockses, Crewdson & Co. Ltd., cotton goods manufacturers. Herwald Ramsbotham, president of the Board of Education, has been director of the British Overseas Stores, Ltd., Bintan Rubber Estates Ltd., British Sugar Manufacturers Ltd., Ceylon Tea Estates, Ltd., Irvin and Johnson (South Africa) Ltd., and Sittany Valley Rubber Estates, Ltd. Minister of Transport, Lt. Col. J. T. C. Moore-Brabazon, is a director of nine companies, among them the Briggs Motor Bodies, Ltd., Associated Daimler Co. Ltd., and the Greyhound Racing Association Trust, Ltd.

Alfred Duff Cooper, Minister of Information, is the cousin of Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Fife, and the brother-in-law of the Duke of Rutland. In the Spanish war, he upheld the government's "great policy of non-intervention." Because Duff Cooper resigned his Cabinet post in the Chamberlain government before the war because of disagreement over the appeasement policy, he has acquired a reputation as an opponent of fascism. The reputation does him an injustice. He is no more an opponent of fascism than is Churchill who, in his recent speech to the Italians, urged them merely to replace Mussolini and all would be forgiven. The December 1939 issue of *Current History* published an interview with Duff Cooper, who was then in America, in which he said that if Hitler were ousted, the English government "would be glad to discuss peace terms." As Hitler's successor, "Goering—the most moderate of them all—would be acceptable."

Herbert Morrison, Minister for Home Security, and Hugh Dalton, Minister of Economic Warfare, both claim to be Socialists. Both have in the past extolled socialism, reviled capitalism, and bitterly attacked the very men with whom they are now collaborating. Said Morrison in 1935, *(Labour and Sanctions)*: "The Labour Party must remove the possibility of the Beaverbrooks using the Crown Colonies merely as fields for exploitation by British capitalism." He also wrote: "We (the Labour Party) are against Tory imperialism and we must not lose our independence of the government . . . we must be free to attack it at every point."

The war crisis of British imperialism found Morrison doing what his Social-Democratic precursors had done in Germany: rescuing the imperialist system and attacking instead the forces of anti-imperialism and democracy—the People's Convention, the Communist Party, the left wing press.

In the first world war the big business Cabinet of Britain also required its Labor window-dressing. In 1915 Arthur Henderson, head of the Labor Party, was taken into a coalition government and served under Asquith and Lloyd George. When, after a visit to revolutionary Russia in 1917, Henderson proposed an international labor conference to end the war, he was thrown out of the Cabinet. In the present war, too, the so-called Labor representatives have the privilege of agreeing with the Tory policies. What their masters really think of them was intimated by Geoffrey Crowther, editor of the London *Economist,* in an article in the magazine section of the New York *Times* of March 23. "Nothing has been more noticeable in Winston Churchill's government," he wrote, "than the personal mediocrity of the labor leaders."

These leaders may yet attain the giddy pinnacle of Labor Party control of the government, with Bevin or some other Laborite as Prime Minister. That would indicate the deepening of the crisis of British imperialism, but it would no more mean socialism for England than when the "Socialist" leaders, Ebert and Scheidemann, were in 1918-19 entrusted by the German capitalists with the job of suppressing the democratic revolution. The battle for democracy, peace, and socialism can be won in all countries only against the will of finance capital and its "Socialist" and National Socialist servitors.

G. S. JACKSON.

Have you read page 13?

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WHY SUMNER WELLES SAID IT

After twenty-four years the State Department admits that the Soviet Union is a great power. Double-talk diplomacy.

Washington.

LAST Wednesday Washington admitted the obvious for the first time since Russia's October Revolution. Under-secretary of State Sumner Welles broke a precedent of twenty-four years' standing and referred to the Soviet Union as a great power. He said that the Soviet Union's declaration of "full understanding and neutrality" in the event that Turkey would have to defend its borders was a source of great satisfaction to the United States. But it is not without significance that Welles made his statement the day before Japanese Foreign Minister Matsuoka arrived in Berlin to discuss the possibility of closer military collaboration between Germany and Japan.

New developments in American-Soviet relations have followed a strikingly similar pattern for the past six months. On the one hand, there have been gestures of friendship from the State Department. On the other hand, there have been hostile maneuvers canceling out the friendly moves. Most important of all, the apparent attempts by this government to improve relations with the USSR have in every case been calculated for immediate diplomatic effect on other powers rather than the removal of barriers between the United States and the Soviet Union. These attempts have very often coincided with threatened or actual activity by Japan against Dutch and British possessions in the Far East which the State Department has been anxious to check.

The signs which seem to point to improved Soviet-American relations have been confined almost wholly to the diplomatic field. In addition to the recent Welles statement, there was the equally spectacular lifting of the "moral embargo" on shipments of planes and other war materials to the Soviet Union. There have been the continuous conferences between Welles and Soviet Ambassador Constantine Oumansky. And then there was the release, after State Department intercession, of Mikhail Gorin, Los Angeles manager of Intourist, who had been convicted on a charge of having obtained information concerning Japanese war strength from the American Naval Intelligence. Welles asked for the release on the ground that "certain important considerations of an international nature" made it to the "public interest."

AT THE SAME TIME there has been no official discouragement of the uninterrupted anti-Soviet activities of William C. Bullitt. Recently Bullitt issued a horrendous statement which in effect blamed the Soviet government for thefts which had occurred in a Catholic church in Moscow. Bullitt's release was distributed in the State Department press room by a State Department employee. He concluded his statement with a tear-jerking plea to Americans "to contribute sums, however small, for the replacement of the holy vessels and other articles stolen from this Christian church." The State Department actually lodged a formal protest with the USSR, and later made public the gist of a reply from the Soviet Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, from which reply it is perfectly plain that Bullitt had been trying to manufacture a major diplomatic incident out of whole cloth. The Soviet Union reported that the robberies had been committed by three professional thieves who had been arrested and were being prosecuted.

IN THE ECONOMIC FIELD particularly there have not been improvements in relations to correspond with diplomatic developments, limited as these have been, between Washington and Moscow. The lifting of the moral embargo has had no practical meaning in terms of shipments to the USSR. The Baltic ships in this country have not been turned over to the Soviet Union. A goodly portion of the Soviet machine tools seized here last year have not been and apparently will not be released. Only three days after the Welles statement on the Soviet pledge of neutrality to Turkey, the President signed a proclamation placing exports of oils and fats under license control. This step followed the British protest against the export of copra and coconut oil from the United States to the USSR.

There has been strong British pressure against improved trade relations between the United States and USSR. Even with the expectation of the Nazi attack on England, the British ruling class has never for a moment forgotten its deep-rooted and inflexible hatred for the Soviet. Washington found it necessary to greet the Soviet note to Turkey, but not Great Britain. The British tories may be faced with a desperate struggle for the preservation of their empire, but they have not yet admitted that the Soviet Union is a great power. It has been apparent from the start that increased Soviet imports from this country have to a large extent replaced purchases made by the USSR before the war from Great Britain. The Department of Commerce survey of American-Soviet trade during 1940 made this plain. And according to a State Department release, Soviet Ambassador Oumansky informed Welles that imports from this country "are destined exclusively for the domestic needs of the USSR." But the British are continuing their propaganda that the Soviet Union is trans-shipping huge quantities of American materials to Germany.

Anti-Soviet intrigue on the part of the British has been intensified since the arrival in Washington of Lord Halifax. It was at about that point that the hullabaloo about Soviet shipments to Germany began to reach its climax. Equally revealing is the systematic anti-Soviet campaign which has been carried on in the last few weeks by Reuters, the official British news agency. Diplomatic circles here recently noted a whole series of blood-curdling, anti-Soviet stories in Latin-American newspapers. These were obviously calculated to disrupt any trend toward friendly relations between the Latin-American republics and the USSR as well as between the United States and the USSR. For example, one of the stories which was printed widely in Chile, Mexico, and other countries, under a fraudulent Moscow date line, said that the Soviet Union had sent 200,000 peasants to the tip of Siberia which juts out toward Alaska to build fortifications and place long-range guns which could reach far into American territory. These stories carried the credit line of LEF Reuters, a branch of Reuters consisting of pro-British employees of Havas. The "dispatch" originated, in fact, from Washington and New York, despite the Moscow date line. Observers here noted with considerable interest the syndicated article of Dr. Herman Rauschning, the favorite ideologist of Dorothy Thompson and hundreds of American editorial writers, which pointed to the difficulties of a German invasion of England and suggested as an alternative the broad and fertile plains of Russia. Rauschning has close connections with tory groups in London.

BUT IF the British ruling class still clings to dreams of appeasement in Europe, the United States is still playing the old Munich shell game in the Far East. It is too well known to need elaboration that the steady flow of oil and other supplies to Japan has continued alongside of the President's speeches about aid to China. More pertinent is the fact that State Department officials make little effort to conceal in private conversations that these shipments represent a considered policy. They take the position that if the Japanese get American oil they will refrain from swooping down on the rich Dutch East Indies to replenish their waning supplies and maintain the colonial *status quo* in the Pacific. That is, of course, a none too original application of the classical appeasement formula.

There is in America today a growing sentiment for better relations with the USSR. And it is easy to see why among many people the Welles comment on the guarantee to Turkey would strike a hopeful chord. But the tortuous, contradictory attitude of the State Department is inherent in American foreign policy. There can be no genuine understanding between the two countries as long as the administration attempts to use the USSR as a catspaw to advance its own imperialist position in Europe and the Far East, as long as it is primarily interested in spreading the war rather than in bringing peace to the world.

ADAM LAPIN.

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There may be no issue . . .

The printer warned us this week. Unless we have $3,000 for him by Tuesday, April 8, to meet long overdue payments the next issue will not go to press.

There is nothing more we can say. You know all the facts. If the postman comes around next week without New Masses, you will know the reason. If that happens, the cause of progress in America will have lost one of its staunchest champions.

Whether that happens or not—is up to you.

The Editors.

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HERO IN STRIPES

Uncle Jim—that's what the other prisoners called J. B. McNamara. A fellow prisoner recalls some moving experiences with the great man inside San Quentin's stone walls. Why the guard didn't fire.

MIDDLE of 1930 six of us—awkward "fish" in new Big-House garb—stood in the immense prison yard. Around us crowded convicts, their clothes faded by long wear under rain and sun. I heard someone calling my name—and there, as I turned around, was J. B. McNamara. I grabbed his hand and while holding onto it I said to my buddies, "This is J. B." Their faces lit up.

There was a little time left before our line-up for our first mess-hall meal. J. B. led the whole group to a corner of the yard where, gathered in a little knot, were the rest of San Quentin's labor prisoners—John Cornelison and Claude Merritt; the 1922 railway shopmen strikers, George Pesce and Chris Madsen; Matt Schmidt and Tom Mooney.

Near them on the yard bench was spread a glittering little "five and ten" store—tooth brushes, tubes of toothpaste, stationery, chocolate bars, smoking tobacco, combs, bottles of ink—all in six little hills, for each of the six "fish." This was the "welcome party" given by the "oldtimers" to the new crop of labor prisoners.

We were touched to the gills, trying to smile, but gulping hard. The "oldtimers" began kidding me. "We told you, Frank, that it wouldn't be long before you'd join our family." This was a reminder of our talks during my frequent visits with San Quentin's labor prisoners, when I was secretary of California's International Labor Defense.

Everyone laughed. The tension was over. The "fish" now felt at home. Then, as the "party" neared its finish, J. B., as the "dean" of San Quentin, gave us the low-down on the Big House and how we could avoid "doing our time too hard," how to avoid the prison's pitfalls, how to absorb quickly the prison's routine, how to eat, walk, talk, sleep, and how—which was of immediate importance—to act in the next day's work line-up in order to keep from landing into the dreaded jute mill.

So ran our first introduction to San Quentin life. Warm and brotherly was the "oldtimers'" reception, wise and fruitful were J. B.'s admonitions.

I WANTED a separate cell. These were in the old prison wings. The new ones were overcrowded with two convicts to each five-by-seven cells. I tried to read, write, study. But it couldn't be done. There was no table, no stool. The light was poor. I tried writing by turning the toilet bowl into a chair with my knees for a table. But then my cellmate had a weak bladder.

I consulted J. B. "Talk to the old man and we'll see what happens" was his advice.

I soon was standing in the Captain of the Yard's office in front of the "old man's" desk, cap in hand.

"What's your beef?" he asked.

"I want a separate cell."

"Uh, can't get along with the other 'con.'"

"No, it isn't that, sir, I want to have a separate cell to read and study."

"Can't let you have it. We keep single cells for 'queers.'"

"Well, that's it, sir, I think I am somewhat 'queer' myself," I tried a stunt.

He rang the bell and asked his convict secretary for my record card. He glanced at it through his eye glasses and over them at me.

"Well maybe you are, at that," and then added, "You must be 'queer' to land here for minding everybody's business but your own."

He paused. "Nope, can't give you a single, I keep 'em for real 'queers'—dopes, dingbats (feeble-minded), 'fruits' (homosexuals), and the likes of them." He motioned to the line outside—"Next."

I told J. B. what happened.

"Well, just take it easy, we'll see what can be done."

Two days later I was up on the scaffolding painting, when I heard the convict-runner shouting my number. I got down. He handed me a "ducat" (a slip of official paper), on which I read "48688 to move to 155 in the old wing." Within thirty minutes I dropped my belongings on the cot of a freshly whitewashed old cell, with an oval ceiling, iron-plated door with a look-out slit, a rusty pail for a toilet and another one for water. That's the price I pay, I thought, from the modern conveniences in the new wings to the medieval ones in the old. Well, it was worth it. I gloated over the luxury of a little square table, a stool. I relished the prospects of writing, studying, reading, without entertaining a homesick and weak-bladdered cellmate.

How did J. B. do that? Quite simply. The old captain's office had quite a number of "cons"—loyal friends of J. B. At a word from him these lads would do their best to please "Uncle Jim."

AN EARLY SUNDAY MORNING. I was standing at the iron-plated door, slop-bucket in hand, straining for the sound of the 7 A.M. bell when the door would swing open into the bright sunshine.

I could hear the trustee moving along opening up the steel doors. But what the hell—he passed by my door without opening it.

In a minute the whole wing was out—men rushing down the rickety iron stairs, slop-buckets in hands. All but me.

Sunday lock-up! This sickened me. I started searching my mind for anything wrong I might have done which brought a penalty. In vain. I couldn't recall having committed any infraction of any rule.

In a few minutes a guard came along, regulation cane on his arm. He darkened the slit in my door.

"48688?"

"Yes sir, that's me."

"Four Sunday lock-ups for you," and he shoves through the slit a ducat and two slices of bread. I catch the ducat and let the bread drop.

I read the ducat over again: "Cause for penalty—failure to plug for work." I laughed out loud, relieved. The guard looked at me and muttered, "What a dingbat." I lay on my cot rejoicing over the minor cause for the lock-ups.

Then things began to happen. Onto the cell's cement floor dropped a package wrapped in newspaper. I tore it open—it was a warm beef-steak! As I looked at it in bewildered wonderment, another package dropped to my feet—cold roast pork. In rapid succession there rained down on me enough provisions to last a week. And what food! Direct from Officers' and Guards' mess.

I guessed it—it was J. B. The moment he learned of my lock-up he begged, borrowed, and stole from his wards—the condemned men (whom he served their daily three meals for the last eighteen years)—parts of their usual sumptuous meals. J. B. had my trustee drop the things through the slit into my cell.

Did I stay locked up the other Sundays? Oh, no. J. B.'s friends in the turnkey's office yanked my lock-up ducats out of the turnkey's desk.

THESE WERE but mild examples of J. B.'s readiness to come to a friend's aid. In dozens of instances, he would help a "con" in distress. Naturally, his first concern was labor prisoners. For them he was ready to go to bat at the drop of a hat.

He was the recipient of uninterrupted prison relief from the ILD. He never used the things he got for himself. Each month he would turn over chocolates, tobacco, etc., that mean so much to men with no kinfolk outside.

Five years ago, for speaking sharply in defense of a young lifer, J. B. was transferred to Folsom Prison—a veritable Devil's Island, reserved for "two-time losers." There J. B. was nearly buried alive—no visitors permitted, letters but once a month. His health was badly affected. The frightened administration returned him to San Quentin. Cancer of the stomach had set in. Two operations performed were futile.

From the outside came constant and urgent pleas to J. B. to permit a campaign for his freedom. No, was the invariable answer.

"Tom (Mooney) and Warren (Billings) must be sprung first, then we'll start thinking about me."

He held that the whole labor movement

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must concentrate upon the Mooney-Billings campaign, without weakening it, as he thought, by a parallel McNamara campaign. "You see," he would expound to us on the inside, "Tom and Warren were framed-up, the whole world knows that; in McNamara's case there was a 'confession' and that, too, the whole world knows," he added bitterly.

"You know how clever labor's enemies are," he would continue. "They are waiting for the chance to seize upon my case to hurt Tom's chances—nothin' doin'."

And so it was. Not until Mooney and Billings were freed did J. B. permit any campaign in his behalf.

His remarkable worker's instinct helped him to understand and accept the Russian Revolution and the new system of society its laboring people were building. Many a time he would, while talking about the USSR, stop for a moment and dream of the achievements of his own class in that country. J. B. had boundless faith in his class. In its victory in America he saw his own freedom.

J. B. was totally without fear.

On a Wednesday morning I was climbing up the stone steps from the "alley" where my paint shop was. Suddenly I sensed a strange silence. I looked up and the sight I saw nearly froze my blood.

Perched on the catwalk on the thick wall stood a guard pointing his sawed-off shotgun at a man in the yard. In a flash I recognized J. B., facing the "bull's" gun, his both hands at his open chest and shouting. . . .

"Go ahead, shoot, you son of a bitch."

The guard fixed a slow aim. The few stray prisoners looked on horrified. Some covered their faces. Everything was still for a solid minute. Then the guard lowered his gun and walked along the catwalk.

J. B., his face ashen with anger, picked up a bundle of underwear at his feet and walked down the stone stairs to the bathhouse.

Then came the details. For the first time in eighteen years J. B. was challenged by a guard for carrying his bundle with underwear to the bath. No prisoner, save J. B. (his only privilege), could carry any bundles through the yard. This guard had it in for J. B. and challenged him. J. B. told him:

"You know damn well what I have in the bundle—same as always, my underwear."

"Drop that bundle or I'll plug you" came from the guard.

It was then that J. B. tore his shirt open at his chest and shouted:

"Shoot, you son of a bitch."

But J. B.'s blazing eyes were too much for the guard. He failed to do what is the custom —shoot at the slightest pretext. If a convict is killed, the coroner's invariable verdict is "shot while trying to attack a guard." This is a method by which the prison administration had rid itself of many a "troublesome" prisoner.

The prison's "check-out" department had performed its duty by me. When I stepped out of its rooms into the front yard, I trod with the unsteady steps of one unaccustomed to regular shoes and clothes. I was especially conscious of the hat and necktie.

It was twilight, after the evening lock-up. I walked along with the guard towards the gate. My eyes swept the yard for a glimpse of a friendly face. I lifted my eyes to the condemned men's porch. There I saw J. B., for the last time. Having gathered the dishes from the condemned men's evening meal he stood alongside a guard.

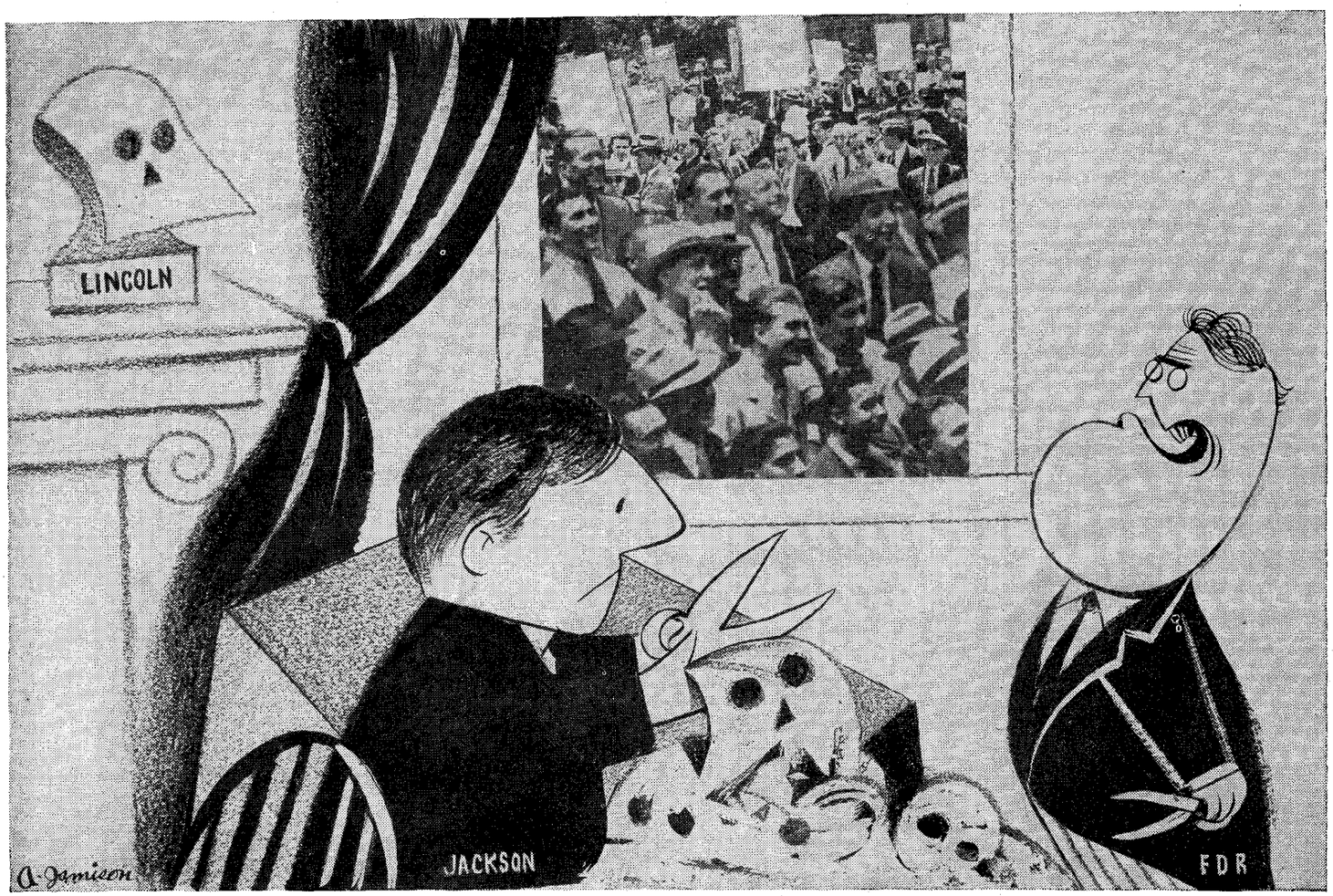
Both looked at me. J. B. waved his long arm. "So long, Frank, don't come back!"

"So long, Jim—see you out!" I waved back.

J. B. is dead. They never let him out. But he will be remembered long after his jailers have been forgotten. For J. B. is part of the whole struggle of the American working class, the struggle for which he sacrificed, and of which he will always be a part.

FRANK SPECTOR.

News Item: "Authorities mask Earl Browder on way to Atlanta to 'de-emphasize' him."



"Say, chief, I'm afraid we're not going to have enough of these to go around."

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THE PEOPLE MEAN PEACE

SEVERAL thousand men and women are gathering in New York April 5-6. They come from all parts of the country to plan peace for America. They speak for nameless millions. And they stand against America's rulers who have driven our country into virtual undeclared war. "Total victory" is the war cry of President Roosevelt. But what the people of America and of all countries yearn for is *total peace*. And that can be achieved only if the economic causes of war are uprooted by giving the people control of their own destiny.

NEW MASSES is happy to be among those who welcome the delegates to the great people's meeting called by the American Peace Mobilization. The fight they are undertaking is in the great tradition of our democracy. They are the warriors of life against death, the bearers of hope and courage, pioneers of freedom. And they speak from the heart of America. NEW MASSES will give their cause all aid, for it is the cause of overwhelming millions not only here, but in Britain, Germany, Italy, and all other countries.

President Roosevelt and the other Democratic and Republican leaders of the war party are now engaged in a scurrilous campaign to discredit the idea of peace. They paint all fighters for peace as fascist agents, fifth columnists, appeasers. But the fact is that it is fascism that has always extolled the virtues of war and imperialist expansion. Those who today speak of an "American century," of a world dominated by the United States instead of by Germany, are speaking Hitler's own language.

It is admitted even by many interventionists that fully eighty-five or ninety percent of our people are opposed to participation in the imperialist conflict. During the election campaign both President Roosevelt and Wendell Willkie acknowledged the strength of this opposition by repeated fervent pledges that they would do everything in their power to keep the United States out of war. In view of this predominant peace sentiment, how explain the success of the war party in leading the country deeper and deeper into economic, political, and military involvement? We believe that the explanation lies primarily in two factors: confusion in regard to the nature of the war, and the comparative weakness of the organized movement for peace. These two problems are closely related.

Confusion concerning the nature of the war has manifested itself in the fact that while the majority of the people are against participation in the war, they also favor aid to Britain. They do not yet understand—because all of the instruments of propaganda and official pressure have conspired to prevent them from understanding—that there is a fundamental contradiction in this attitude, that aid to one side in the imperialist struggle must inevitably frustrate the wish to remain at peace. The unscrupulous shell game organized in Washington has deceived many into accepting illusion for reality—each step toward war as a measure to keep the United States out. The truth must be brought to millions, the truth that imperialism is the enemy, whether in Germany, England, or the United States, that the enslavement of India's teeming masses is as great a crime as the seizure of Austria and Czechoslovakia, that the fascism of Wall Street is no less an evil than the fascism of Berlin.

Confusion regarding the war also breeds unclarity concerning the methods of fighting for peace. Many Americans, disillusioned in the policies of Roosevelt and Willkie, have turned to General Wood and Lindbergh, to organizations like the America First Committee and the No Foreign Wars Committee. These individuals and organizations, however, are merely exploiting the peace feelings of the people to serve the interests of one section of big business, which is just as reactionary and imperialistic as that dominant section which openly pursues a policy of war. Some of those who speak for the capitalist groups which profess to oppose interventionism have actually collaborated in the colossal deception of the people by depicting British imperialism as the rampart of democracy, merely insisting that a harder bargain be driven for less generous assistance. Alfred M. Landon and Joseph P. Kennedy represent this view. Others, like Colonel Lindbergh, who are more consistently isolationist, regard peace as a pawn in a great imperialist chess game. Their faith is not in the people, but in the military might of German imperialism; they believe it is the better part of realism to come to terms with that might and thereby frustrate the anti-fascist, anti-imperialist peace which the people themselves may impose. And all these so-called opponents of war believe that a policy of aggressive imperialism in Latin America will offer greater dividends than active military participation in a long exhausting war whose outcome is uncertain both as between the contending powers and between the system of imperialism and the democratic struggle of the people. And their calculations, like those of the avowed war advocates, seek the ultimate solution of capitalism's problems through war against the Soviet Union.

In Congress, too, the influence of the America First Committee has greatly hampered the fight for peace. Men like Senators Taft and Vandenberg are obvious big business apologists whose criticism has been directed merely at the forms of aid to Britain; they have already abandoned even the pretense of a fight. Others, like Senator Wheeler and Senator Nye, while reflecting to some extent popular pressure for genuine resistance to the war promoters, have weakened their position and helped sow confusion by supporting some form of assistance to Britain and a policy of hemisphere imperialism. In the entire Congress only Rep. Marcantonio, American Laborite, has fought consistently for the interests of the people because he alone exposed the *imperialist* character of the war and stood firm against aid to either side, as well as against an arms program geared to the predatory aims of American imperialism.

The situation would be desperate indeed if the fight for peace depended on the America First outfit and its congressional abettors. But fortunately for our country's future, there came into existence last summer an organization of a totally different type, the American Peace Mobilization. Peace Mobilization—the very name is symbolic. This is no committee manipulated from the top, but a mass movement with roots deep among the common folk in every part of the country. And to its people's meeting April 5-6 there will come representatives from AFL and CIO unions, from farm and Negro organizations, from religious, youth, and women's groups, from every type of pro-

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gressive movement, as well as directly from the factories and from the neighborhoods where average Americans are beginning to bestir themselves. Though it has a long way to go, the American Peace Mobilization has already extended its influence into a larger cross-section of the population than its predecessors.

One of the decisive questions in building the peace movement is the role of the trade unions. Without the working class this battle cannot be won. Though individual unions are participating, the AFL and the CIO as a whole have stood outside the fight for peace. Both the AFL top leadership and the Hillman group in the CIO have tried to convert the labor movement into an appendage of the war party. Nor did the statement of President Philip Murray, opposing the lend-lease bill but supporting aid to Britain, provide the kind of leadership that labor requires in this emergency. The last CIO convention stated unequivocally: "This nation must not enter any foreign entanglements which may in any way drag us down the path of entering or becoming involved in foreign wars." That resolution needs to be implemented. Any other course is suicidal. Among the leadership of the CIO, men like Joseph Curran, president of the National Maritime Union, and Reid Robinson, head of the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers and a vice-chairman of the American Peace Mobilization, are showing the way.

After the passage of the lend-lease bill has come the seizure of the ships of the Axis powers. And now the trial balloons are being sent up in preparation for naval convoys, though Secretary of the Navy Knox himself told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the use of convoys would be an act of war. Can the incendiaries be halted and peace restored to America? The answer lies with the American people. Peace, civil liberties, the maintenance and improvement of living standards—these are parts of a single whole that alone can give flesh and blood to democracy. These aims will undoubtedly acquire new stature at the people's meeting in New York, a gathering that calls to mind the People's Convention in England. The men and women at this meeting are the representatives of the ultimate history-makers. The world will not forever belong to its despoilers. The American people are entering a battle that will test them sternly. Whatever its immediate outcome, we are confident that theirs will be the final decision.

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HOME WAS A MILLION STREETS

A legend out of the Middle West, somewhere near the state of Kansas where a certain teacher came from. Two little girls from the rutabaga country tell the story.

ONCE upon a time there were two little girls who lived on the prairie around the rutabaga country. They lived with their mother, who worked, and was gone a good deal, and very often they were left alone.

If you were ever alone on the prairie, or anywhere for that matter, you know how it is—little things look very big and sometimes you do not know what the big things are until it is too late. And when the sun goes down, then is when it gets to be very bad indeed—things begin to rise from the earth's horizon and move in the shadows and the long line of prairie is nowhere and the blue air in the earth cup is nothing.

Always moving from place to place doesn't help you from feeling lonely, leaving rooms you will never see again, walking on roads you do not know, going to places you cannot imagine.

There are many such little girls—American refugees perhaps, looking out at dusk and they have small hearts but they wonder hugely—what next—where to—what now?

Well, these two little girls went one night with their mother because there was no one to leave them with, and working mothers must pack their children, like squaws, wherever they go; and so these two went with their mother to hear a man speak and they sat in a big place with thousands of others so they did not feel lonely, and a man who looked very familiar spoke in a calm voice like a teacher. They felt they had heard this voice for a long time, the long prairie speech with strong r's, and as they listened they felt at home, as if home was a meeting with this man talking, home was a million streets, a thousand hall bedrooms, as if home was this struggle he spoke of. He leaned down like a father and explained it to them—about food, about houses, land, and money, and while they did not understand everything this man said to them, they felt his fatherly teaching, his anger, and his love.

When the meeting was over they said to their mother, "Who was that?"

And their mother said, "That was Comrade Browder."

"Is he a relative of ours?"

And the mother looked at them and they didn't have many relatives and their eyes said, please let him be, and so she said, "Yes, I guess he is, kind of. . . ."

And she was surprised at how happy they were that now they had a relative who was a teacher and who remembered them and knew their loneliness.

The next day a curious thing happened which seemed, however, to the children to be the most natural thing in the world. Somebody came to their door and knocked and he had a coat on his arm, a plain black coat, the kind a man wears a long time, that looks like him at last, and this person said, "I hear you are going upstate tomorrow."

"Yes," said the mother. "We are moving on."

And the man said, "Will you take this coat?"

And the woman said, "Whose coat is it?"

And the children heard the man say then, "It is the coat of Comrade Browder."

The children were delighted. The coat had been left and they were to take it with them to a place where the teacher would speak again and they would be the sole guardians of the coat of Comrade Browder. They smoothed it out and they carried it carefully, the coat of their sole relative.

When they were riding in the old Ford they sat with their hands on the coat and they said, "How does he know us when he never saw us?" And the mother said, "We are just like millions of others who are oppressed, who wander from place to place, who have no peace."

"And does he know them all?"

"Yes," she said. "In America, in China, in Spain, in all the world, they are the people. . . ."

"Are we the people?" And she looked back at them so tiny in the back seat with the prairie behind them and what would become of them now and she said, "Yes, you are the people. . . ." She saw their eyes big with wonderment and their hands smoothing the precious coat that lay across their laps.

After awhile it got dark—in this prairie darkness I spoke of—so full of man's wandering and sorrow, and the chill came up from the dusty fields, from the broken teeth of the dead lands and pretty soon the mother said because they were so quiet, "Are you cold; are you afraid?"

And they cried out happily like sparrows, "No, we are remembered now. We are not alone. . . ."

And she said, perplexed, "Remembered?"

"Yes," they said, now without fear. "We are under the coat of Comrade Browder."

And the mother began to cry softly with joy.

And driving over the prairie through the night, under the warm coat, the two children had many dreams, those dreams that live in the hungers of many, and they made a little song that went with the turn of the wheels and beat with the tiny pulse in their wrists . . . the coat of Comrade Browder . . . the coat of Comrade Browder . . . the coat of Comrade Browder . . . until they fell into a warm sleep lighted by strange future fires.

MERIDEL LE SUEUR.

Sylvia Wald

Harlem slave market

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THE PEOPLE STORM OLYMPIA

Great things are brewing in the Northwest. The folk of the state of Washington band together in their Commonwealth Federation. What they told the legislators. By Hugh De Lacy.

Seattle.

EVERY day for a week a line of men and women walked up and down in front of the capitol building at Olympia. "Seat Westman," their banners read. "The people elect, the Senate rejects." "Westman is for peace." "Twenty-seven little Hitlers overrule 8,500 voters." The Senate had refused to seat Lenus Westman, Swedish-American farmer, elected from the Thirty-ninth District. Westman had formerly been a member of the Communist Party, a fact which he frankly acknowledged. One can be a fascist and an anti-Semite and still be a respected member of the legislature, but even a former adherence to Communism is sufficient to cause the self-styled exponents of democracy to annul the vote of 8,500 American citizens. Though a Senate investigating committee voted three to two to seat Westman, the full body supported the minority.

The speaker of the House called to one side a representative who had been elected with the support of the Washington Commonwealth Federation. "Tell them not to picket the House," he said nervously. "Tell them that the House is not in sympathy with the Senate's refusal to seat Westman."

"Will you support a House resolution disapproving the unseating of Senator Westman, Mr. Speaker?" the representative asked.

"No," was the answer.

"Then tell the pickets yourself."

In the governor's office a woman rose from a carved, leather-covered throne chair. "Governor," she said, "I come from Clark County. I am seventy-one years old. My husband is seventy-four. We have worked long enough. Do we have to give up our house and the land we have worked and saved for all our lives to get a pension? Is that what the people voted for? We own ten acres and a house. We have no income except what we work for. The land is worth nothing because no one will buy. Why can't we get the $40 pension the people voted? Is that your idea?"

The woman was a member of the Washington Old Age Pension Union. She had been chosen by a mass meeting on the capitol steps to serve on a committee to see the Republican governor, Arthur Langlie. Lenus Westman was also a member of this committee, and a third person represented the Washington Commonwealth Federation. They asked questions—embarrassing questions—not only about pensions, but about taxation and about an anti-sabotage bill that would outlaw strikes.

On the floor above another committee was interviewing the lieutenant governor. Across the spacious marble a third committee was asking questions of the honorable speaker of the House. And in every corner and at every door, little knots of angry voters were asking nervous senators and representatives why they had not voted for the Pension Union's resolution requesting the Social Security Department and the governor to increase their budget recommendations. For one day the capitol building was emptied of big business lobbyists; the people had come to demand their rights.

A FEW MINUTES before the chartered buses and the cavalcade of private cars were to carry them back to their home towns and counties, nearly five hundred persons belonging to labor, farm, unemployed, youth, pension, and other progressive organizations reassembled on the steps to hear state Sen. N. P. Atkinson, president of the Washington Old Age Pension Union.

"You have heard from your elected committees," Atkinson said. "You have heard that the governor will *consider* the income tax, will *consider* an increase in the pensions and security budget, will *consider* our opposition to the sales tax and the bills to blackout civil liberties. You have heard that the lieutenant governor is for labor and for the pensioners—and for an increased tax on the food and necessities of both. You have heard that the speaker of the House is flatly opposed to the income tax and for a four percent sales tax. You talked to your own senators and representatives, and most of them were for you in the halls and against you on the roll call."

The men and women who crowded around him understood. They went back home to intensify the fight.

The demand for the seating of Westman and the struggle for increased appropriations for social services are two of the many battles that converge in the great people's movement, the Washington Commonwealth Federation. Recently the WCF held its eighth annual convention—the most successful in its history. The Commonwealth Federation has survived the crises that have shattered other United Front movements in the past year and a half; it has not only survived, but has grown in strength and clarity. Today it is a major force in the political life of the state. Twenty-five state senators and representatives endorsed the legislative conference held in connection with the convention. International officers of CIO and AFL unions urged their locals to participate. Washington's US senators and representatives sent messages. Senator Wheeler sent a two-page letter.

Heliker

To the convention in Seattle came delegates from twenty of the state's thirty-nine counties. From Camp Kettle, 'way up near the Canadian border in the northeast corner of the state; from Walla Walla in the southeast corner; from Vancouver in the south; from Bellingham in the north. They came from AFL and CIO unions, pension unions, Workers Alliance locals, Granges, Democratic clubs, women's auxiliaries, peace committees, youth groups—982 regular and 154 fraternal delegates, clear-eyed and strong-hearted. They hitch-hiked, they rode box cars, they piled into old jalopies.

There was reason for pride. The WCF had been pronounced dead scores of times. Former leaders, who imagined themselves indispensable, had deserted to the warmakers. Pseudo-liberals like Senator Farquharson, spokesman for the American Civil Liberties Union, and Senator Sullivan, former president of the Pension Union, Red-baited, pooh-poohed, and deprecated. The newspapers distorted, deleted, suppressed. Radio stations denied time. Certain false leaders of the labor movement vented their spleen. But the common people stuck with the Commonwealth Federation.

THE DELEGATES reviewed the WCF's past achievements and made plans for the future. They struck hard against the Hitlers on both sides of the war. They opposed all attacks on civil liberties. They demanded payment of the full forty-dollar pension under the Pension Union-sponsored Initiative 141, which the people of the state had voted but which the governor and legislature have sabotaged. They urged the formation of a "genuine people's party, a farm, labor, security party for democracy, peace, and plenty." They cabled fraternal greetings to D. N. Pritt, chairman of the British People's Convention. They greeted the Chinese national government and urged Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek to "oppose appeasement elements within your country who, in cooperation with world imperialisms, make war on the Chinese Communists and destroy the unity of the people against the invader."

I give you here only a skeleton of what was essentially flesh and blood. Our movement is going forward; our path will be hard, but we shall not falter. As the revised preamble of our platform and constitution states: "There can be no unity between democracy and war, privation and abundance, America's democratic heritage and Wall Street dictatorship. The people of our state and nation have a common goal: peace, security, and liberty."

HUGH DE LACY.

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Reckoning in Yugoslavia

THE most obvious and impressive fact about the Yugoslav upheaval is that Hitler has suffered a real setback. It may be less obvious, but even more important that British imperialism does not gain anywhere near as much as German imperialism loses. What happened in Yugoslavia was that the common people, especially Serbs and Montenegrans in the south, did not wish to become German vassals. They did not go for this "new order" stuff at all. Instead they came out on the streets of their villages and provincial capitals, and sweeping army sympathies with them, they forced a dictatorial government out of office, a government which had just signed their independence away at Vienna. The drama and impact of this spectacle does not arise from the fact that a young prince succeeds his discredited uncle. Nor does it arise from the conspiratorial brilliance of a few generals. The important thing is that the whole world got a glimpse of the deep, maturing revolt in the hearts and minds of the European masses. The psychological advantage may appear to lie on Britain's side, but the important fact is that the Yugoslav people do not want to fight on either side. Indeed, their references to Britain on placards in the Belgrade street demonstrations were invariably coupled with favorable references to the Soviet Union. This would indicate a far deeper, closer, instinctive bond with the ideals of the British People's Convention or the American Peace Mobilization than with the aims of Churchill and Roosevelt. Here is the point we made in these columns last week. Anti-Nazi sentiment and potentiality is there in Europe, to be sure; but it is not necessarily pro-British. This is the key to what will be happening in Europe before the war has run much more of its course.

THE REASONS for these events lie in their historical background. Yugoslavia has been ruled by a bitter, brutal dictatorship since 1929. That was when King Alexander took power, and upon his assassination in October 1934, Prince Paul, a White Russian emigre, took over the regency, sponsored by the British banking aristocracy. In the next five years, German economic penetration began to displace French, Belgian, and British control of Yugoslav life. But in those "appeasement" days, this conflict did not upset Yugoslavia's equilibrium, except that the Croatian people were denied their autonomy. With the outbreak of war, however, it was clear that as a Versailles state, Yugoslavia was headed for trouble. To strengthen itself, the Cvetkovitch Cabinet came to terms with the Croatian nationalists under Dr. Matchek in the last days of August 1939. But none of the other reforms which the coalition regime promised was carried out. Only government trade unions were recognized and real strikes forbidden. Newspaper censorship continued with the left-wing totally underground. Municipal elections were never resumed. Both the Croatian and Serb politicians veered steadily toward full adjustment to Germany's needs. The Foreign Minister, Cincar-Markovitch, had been ambassador in Berlin and was much enamored of fascist methods. Popular opinion plus the changed political situation in eastern Europe made it tactically wise to recognize the Soviet Union in June of last year. But by a series of trade agreements, the Nazis began to take more and more of Yugoslav grains and minerals out of the country. Native industry suffered as a result; prices mounted; economic dissatisfaction took on political forms, and the peasants faced literal starvation although their country is one of Europe's granaries.

After France fell, the people were treated to the spectacle of French industrialists selling their interests in the Yugoslav copper and aluminum ore mines to German trusts, all of which fanned a general resentment against the Coalition Cabinet. Finally, the occupation of Rumania last fall broke the last of Yugoslavia's alliances. When Bulgaria adhered to the "new order," and when Turkey reaffirmed her intention of defending only her own soil, it was clear that the patchwork kingdom could no longer maintain its position. Croat and Slovene leaders were torn between hatred of Hitler's economic domination and their desire to propitiate him, since their wide fertile plains lie open to attack from Italy, Austria, Hungary, and Rumania. The ruling politicians tried to delay by bargaining, but in the face of Bulgaria's expectation of territory at Yugoslav expense, they did not have strong enough cards. With popular passions mounting, with the demand for a rapprochement with the Soviet Union growing, with unusual pressure from London and Washington, another group of political figures, representing a wider popular base, and leaning on the army, took power.

WHAT HAPPENS NOW remains in doubt. Already internal differences of interest are coming to the surface. The new government is primarily Serbian. It is very heterogeneous, composed of both liberals and generals, and what kind of internal policy it will pursue is still unclear. The Karageorgevitch dynasty is Serbian in character; the crowning of the young Peter was accompanied by Greek Orthodox ceremonies. This is riling the Roman Catholics, most of whom are Croatians, and that is why much depends on the bourgeois-nationalist, Matchek. Hitler has, of course, been cheated of excellent communications through the Yugoslav river valleys, without which he cannot bear down on Greece or contemplate the next stages of his drive toward the Near East. One possibility, therefore, is a disintegration of Yugoslavia in which the Croats come to terms with Germany. This would isolate Serbia and Montenegro, but if the British really have a substantial force in Greece, they might succeed in re-creating the fronts of the last war. That would be a real achievement for them, although it would also be a challenge which Germany could not afford to ignore. Another possibility is that the new regime will reaffirm its desire for neutrality in such terms that Hitler will have to respect it. Whether he could accept a second-best arrangement and proceed to his Near Eastern campaign with a neutral Yugoslavia on his flank is something for him and his generals to decide. Last week's events gave a new turn in the Balkan crisis, but the crisis will continue and deepen. Its effects in Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and all east European countries must be profound. Churchill can gamble only so far and no further with this kind of situation. Hitler has already shown that he must handle it with great caution.

Ethiopian Debacle

APART from the events in southeastern Europe, the war takes on its most dramatic forms in east Africa and the Mediterranean. Over London and Berlin, this war may appear to be a struggle for the defense of the homeland, but out in the colonial world there is no question that it is a war for empire. Last week it was the Italian empire which suffered the heaviest blows. Coming into eastern Africa from several directions, British troops have over-run Italian Somaliland; last week the key town of Cheren fell after a long siege, opening the way to Italian bases on the Red Sea. On the central Ethiopian plateau, the town of Harar has fallen, making possible a conquest of the railway that runs to the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa. Mussolini stands to lose a quarter of a million soldiers and an equal number of civilians are cut off from their homeland. At best, the fascisti are now fighting a delaying action to prevent the British from freeing their troops for action in the Near East. To cap it all, the British Admiralty reports the sinking of some five Italian cruisers and destroyers plus a ship of a heavier class. This is a serious blow for the Italian navy, which suffered damage at Taranto back in November. Events like these appear as routine in the week's news but, like the resignation of Marshal Graziani, they emphasize the disintegration of Mussolini's position.

Buccaneering

AN EQUALLY important development in the war was the seizure of twenty-eight Italian, two German, and thirty-five Danish vessels by the United States. This may be followed by further seizures of Axis shipping in Latin-American ports. These ships had not been active, in view of the British blockade; therefore their loss is a negative one for Hitler and Mussolini. But what may happen is that the United States will turn them over to

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Britain, or release an equivalent amount of its own shipping for British use. Since the total runs into 300,000 tons, it makes a tasty morsel for the Empire. There's been nothing like it since the British themselves hijacked ships belonging to the Soviet Baltic republics, Norway, France, Belgium, Holland, and Greece. Naturally, we shed no tears for the Axis, but to Americans such an action means that our government has a chip on its shoulder. Mr. Roosevelt hesitates to declare the war he has been preparing for, but nothing would suit his aims better than to have Italy or Germany declare it for him. Then he could go to town with naval convoys, crack down on labor even faster than he is, and start the fires upon the troop transports. The ship seizures can be justified by the laws of war, of course. They indicate that Roosevelt considers himself at war. And in this war every kind of buccaneering goes, on both sides.

Foxhunting for War Aims

AMONG people in the know, it is generally agreed that Lord Halifax did not make a very good impression with his "maiden" speech to the Pilgrims Society. Even his well publicized interviews with Mayor LaGuardia, his visit to the Empire State Building, his conferences with the Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish clergy hardly made matters better with the average man. It is very hard for Americans to warm up to this sanctimonius aristocrat, who finishes a week of phrase-making with a weekend of foxhunting. Halifax is a chilly article. He may be the brains of the British Cabinet, but he remains a headache to his own publicity men.

What he told us about the war we have all heard before; what he promises us after the war we simply don't believe. In fact, in this whole discussion of war aims, it is really unnecessary to insist on their clarification. For the very progress of the war is making them clear enough. In Ethiopia, the British are polishing off the Italian empire, and they will make Haile Selassie as independent as the king of Iraq. Their puppet Polish government is permitted to publish four anti-Semitic sheets, while the London *Daily Worker* gets banned; in fact, the Sikorski government has never called off its war against the Soviet Union and still dreams of a greater Polish empire stretching from the Baltic to the Black Sea. Hidden away in last week's papers, we came across the item that the "Free French" crowd, another British phantom, is supporting the fierce repression which the Vichy government is meting out against the Syrian independence movement. Scores of people have been shot down in Syria; the big cities are isolated by censorship; troops are parading the streets —but when it comes to holding colonial peoples down, the Free Frenchers have no war aim different from General Weygand's. In Canada, or in Britain itself, liberty is going on shorter and shorter rations. The trade union movements are being smashed by Minister Bevin's own mobilization plans: that is a perfectly clear war aim, too.

As for India, Lord Halifax said what was expected of him. He blamed the Indians because they were "not ready" for dominion status, and when a couple of American reporters reminded him of British promises to the Jewish people in re Palestine, the Holy Fox was peeved. Lord Halifax assured his audience that Britain was not going socialist; thereby he exposed those fatuous liberals and Socialist pretenders who have been selling us Lord Halifax on the grounds that Britain was going socialist. As a matter of fact, the British Socialist leaders themselves are talking about "cushioning the shock" of the "post-war unemployment" and their Arthur Greenwood is the head of a Cabinet sub-committee to deal with these questions. All of which is proof that socialism is not one of their war aims. For socialism would solve the post-war problems in quite a different spirit than Churchill intends. Whatever socialism there is in Britain when this war is over will come in opposition to Bevin and Atlee and Morrison and Halifax rather than through them. We propose that Lord Halifax stick to his foxhunting; his war aims speak for themselves.

The Anti-Jackson Speech

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S anti-Jackson Day speech was another polemic against the unquenchable desire of the American people for peace. Of course, he didn't face that issue squarely. He directed his fire at the Communists and at those whom he was pleased to call "agents of Nazism," but let no one be so naive as to believe that the President would make the crux of a major speech an attack merely against the comparatively small Communist Party. It is because on the issue of peace the Communists speak the innermost thoughts of millions that the President finds it necesary to abuse them with deceitful rhetoric and ill-concealed threats. And in his fulmination against "the ungodly gospel of fear" there is the echo of his own fear—fear of the people's hate of war, of their yearning for a decent life, of their ultimate settling of accounts.

Truth, too, is an outlaw under the Roosevelt scheme of things. It is not true that the great industrialists of Germany have been killed or put in concentration camps. As G. S. Jackson showed in New Masses of Feb. 11, 1941, they are very much on top of the heap in Germany—as they are in America. It is equally untrue that the French workers were betrayed by the Communists—and not all the arts of that notorious appeaser and friend of Petain and Roosevelt, William C. Bullitt, can mitigate the lie. The French workers were betrayed by the man who has been called the French Roosevelt, Leon Blum, and by the fifth column government of Daladier, with whom our government collaborated so intimately. This is history.

President Roosevelt's references to free elections in the United States were particularly inept. For in the very next breath he tells us that his Republican pseudo-opponent, Wendell Willkie, has demonstrated the virtues of the two-party system by agreeing with him, and that the Republicans and Democrats in Congress likewise stand for the same things.

We call this an anti-Jackson Day speech advisedly. All one has to do is to compare it with the Jackson Day addresses of 1938 and 1939. For what the President did this year, in contrast to the pre-war years, was to conceal the fact that Jackson's principal fight, his major contribution to American democracy was his championing of the common people against the economic royalists of that day. This fight Jackson, unlike Roosevelt, never abandoned.

Anti-Semitism Spreads

IN BRITAIN hundreds of Jewish refugees are interned in concentration camps "for the duration." The British authorities at Palestine turn back boatloads of Jews who have fled from Hitler's persecution, but admit savagely anti-Semitic army officers from Poland. Under cover of war and "defense," anti-Semitism is growing in both the United States and Britain.

Those are some of the outstanding facts about the plight of the Jews which Rabbi Moses Miller of the Jewish People's Committee brought out in an eighty-page report to his organization's fifth annual convention held recently in New York. The report is an illuminating answer to those who would delude the Jewish people into support of Britain on the ground that this war is a war "against anti-Semitism." Rabbi Miller does not stop with a passionate excoriation of Hitler's sadistic regime. For Hitlerism, as he makes plain, is not confined to Hitler's territory. British and French—yes, and American—rulers supported Hitlerism against Spain and Czechoslovakia, supported it in Germany itself, and encouraged its growth in their own countries. And Hitlerism, in other forms than overt anti-Semitism, is the very essence of the Roosevelt administration's war campaign against the democratic rights and peace of the American people.

The story of Palestine—the broken promises, the White Papers, the successive betrayals by the Balfours and Churchills—is miserable enough evidence of British imperialism's attempt to further its own ends in the last war at the expense of the Jews. Rabbi Miller's recounting of this story should be read in particular by Senator Wagner of New York. For the senator has just formed a committee with the announced aim of "establishing a national homeland for the Jews in Palestine at the conclusion of this war." Has the senator forgotten that such a "national homeland" was supposed to have been established after the last war—that it was promised the Jewish people in return for their support in the war? Now, since the promise was never fulfilled, Mr. Wagner sees an opportunity to make it again! This is grotesque, a mockery of the Jewish people's intelligence. It is a sample of the tactics being used by the administration to turn the truly anti-fascist sentiment of the people into the service of fascism and war.

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Readers' Forum

Harry Bridges

TO NEW MASSES: In recent weeks, Roger Baldwin of the American Civil Liberties Union has been notifying certain people in New York City not to participate publicly in the defense of Harry Bridges, West Coast labor leader. Baldwin asserts that the Bridges case involves no issue of civil liberties, not even that of double jeopardy or subjection to an ex post facto law. As an attorney affiliated with the Bridges Defense Committee I was asked to send a formal and full letter to Baldwin, protesting his action, and calling him to account. It has been suggested that, with the release of the letter to the press, NEW MASSES might be interested in printing it.

Dear Mr. Baldwin:

I have long been a member of the American Civil Liberties Union. For a long time, the principles for which the ACLU stands have been important to me.

I have been informed that you are advising members of the Union that the pending deportation proceeding against Harry Bridges involves no issue of civil liberties, and that therefore neither the members individually, nor the organization, should protest against, or appear in, the matter. This seems so shocking a departure from the time honored position of the Union in similar situations, that I feel you must be laboring under some misunderstanding of the facts and issues involved. In an attempt, if possible, to efface that misunderstanding, I address this letter to you.

Firstly, it must be remembered that Mr. Bridges was already subjected to a long and costly eleven-week trial, at which Dean James McCauley Landis, of Harvard University Law School, presided. He was, as you know, acquitted of all charges.

True, the inquiry then involved primarily the question *whether Bridges was affiliated with, or a member of, the Communist Party when the warrant of deportation was issued.* Today, the issue ostensibly is this—*"Was Bridges at any time after his entry into this country affiliated with, or a member of, the Communist Party?"* This latter question springs from the adoption by Congress of the Alien Registration Act of 1940—after the completion of the proceeding before Dean Landis.

But, in truth and in fact, at the first Bridges hearing *testimony was offered by the government—and was admitted—and was carefully considered by Dean Landis,* covering the time when he entered the country until the time of his trial. More than twenty government witnesses testified about his alleged Communistic activities between April 12, 1920, when he paid his entry tax in San Francisco, until July 10, 1939, when he faced his accusers. After carefully weighing this evidence, the Dean rendered a decision which I commend to your careful reconsideration—if you have not already reviewed it. You will find there a most precise, well documented and thorough analysis, digest and evaluation of all of the government's evidence covering every phase of each isolated act of Mr. Bridges. The conclusion there reached upon 7,724 pages of evidence and 274 exhibits, is a complete vindication of the Pacific Coast labor leader, and a repudiation of the government's witnesses and its entire case. If none of the evidence introduced by the government showed Bridges to be a Communist, or affiliated with the Communist Party, *at any time after 1920,* when he entered the country, can it honestly be said that the government is entitled to a re-trial for the purpose of showing that he was a Communist *at some time* between his entry and this date?

The groundless character of such a contention is revealed by examining the text itself of the decision of Dean Landis; on page seven of his decision, he states: "The alien's (i. e., Bridges) response to the government's charges against him was a complete and unequivocal denial. *Not only did he deny that he was a member of the Communist Party, but he also denied that he had ever been a member of that party.*" And these denials were found to be true. And these findings became final by act of the government itself!

Can even the most skeptical now be heard to say that Harry Bridges has not in reality already been tried and acquitted of the very charges he is now forced by the government to answer for a second time?

But you indicate that a new law has been passed, and that therefore a re-trial under such a law raises no question of civil rights, no question of constitutional principle or dogma. Are we to assume thereby that the mere passage of a new law and a proposed hearing thereunder cancels out all of the civil liberties of the individual unfortunately at bar?

Need the point be argued to you that every proceeding undertaken by every federal, state, county, or city government is predicated upon some law—new or old—and upon some hearing—formal or informal? Need you be reminded that in virtually every case in which the ACLU has taken a prominent part, the particular governmental agency involved was able to show—at least upon the face of the record—ostensible compliance with the minimum requirements of due process of law?

Heretofore, did we of the American Civil Liberties Union silence our voices because of a showing of theoretical compliance with the naked minimum guaranties of due process? No, we have always demanded a careful review of the entire proceeding and of the facts leading up thereto, so that we could determine, not whether there was an apparent fulfillment of legal niceties, but whether in fact the fundamental rights of every individual, however unpopular he might be, were being preserved inviolate. And among these fundamental rights which we demanded for all was the guarantee against double jeopardy and ex post facto laws.

That an alien in this country is entitled to these rights is established by Dean Landis at page 138 of his decision—"Indeed, the seriousness of the consequences of deportation to the alien involved, despite the fact that the proceeding is regarded as technically civil in character, lead me to the conclusion that those constitutional standards of fairness in criminal administration set forth in the sixth amendment should have application by analogy to proceedings of this character" (i.e., deportation proceedings).

If our concepts of democratic rights had been satisfied by the ipse dixit of arresting officers, or State's Attorneys, or federal officials, then there never would have been any participation by us in the Leo Frank, or Sacco-Vanzetti, or Scottsboro, or Herndon, or Hague, or Mooney cases. There, as everywhere else, we were solemnly assured by well meaning, but zealous, prosecutors that the proceedings were entirely in accordance with the provisions of law.

The states of Georgia, Mississippi, Florida, and California each had dozens of laws—new and old—which they applied against Herndon, Chambers, White, Frank, Norman Thomas, Mooney, and others whom they sought to persecute, but the ACLU announced then that it was neither the mumbo-jumbo of the astute lawyer, nor the dexterity of skilled legal draftsmen, which concerned it. We wanted to know then whether Negroes were being excluded systematically from jury panels, no matter what the recitation of the particular law upon its face; we wanted to know then if confessions were being wrung from defendants by force and by threats—no matter how often the signed confession itself set forth the mocking recital: "This confession is freely and voluntarily given;" we wanted to know then whether District Attorneys were participating in efforts to suppress and suborn evidence—no matter how repeatedly we were assured that fair trials were being accorded; we wanted to know then whether Mayor Hague was so enforcing a law which was otherwise fair upon its face, as to discriminate against persons and groups whom he disliked. We took these positions because we deeply believe that the heart of democracy is real—and not theoretical—freedom from unjust prosecution. In the name of this earlier record of the ACLU, I call upon you to take the same position in the Bridges case, and to urge others to do likewise.

In closing, may I suggest to you that your reconsideration be not affected at all by the reputation of Mr. Robert H. Jackson, Attorney General, as a liberal; certainly, the crimes of Mr. A. Mitchell Palmer would not have been any less heinous if he, too, had been wont to utter well rounded phrases in praise of civil liberties.

And while you deliberate, may I recall for you the oft-quoted statement of former Supreme Court Justice Brandeis, which seems peculiarly pertinent now:

"Experience should teach us to be most on our guard to protect liberty when the government's purposes are beneficial. Men born to freedom are naturally alert to repel invasion of their liberty by evil minded rulers. The greatest dangers to liberty lurk in insidious encroachment by men of zeal, well meaning, but without understanding."

I shall await your reply, and shall continue to hope that you will join us in the defense of Harry Bridges, and urge others to support our efforts to prevent the seemingly imminent persecution of the California Director of the CIO.

Los Angeles, Calif. CHARLES J. KATZ.

Call a Halt

TO NEW MASSES: It is generally known that Earl Browder has been tried and sentenced for his political opinions. The pretense of legal technicality is so thin that reactionary commentators have already forgotten the technical "crime," and rejoice over the fact that the party in power has sent a man to prison for four years because he exercised the American right of free speech.

I don't see how there can be any disagreement about such a case. Political persecution is repugnant to all decent people: it is not made any more lovely by being disguised in the cloak of a flimsy legal subterfuge. This is the familiar Nazi pattern: old laws are twisted, new laws are hastily invented, in order to give an appearance of legality to the corrupt and violent suppression of the democratic process.

It is time to call a halt to that sort of thing in our country. I believe there should be a nation-wide demand for Browder's release. I believe that a vast, and growing, body of Americans will be proud to join in making that demand.

Hollywood, Calif. JOHN HOWARD LAWSON.

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AN AMBASSADOR'S DIARY

An honest man went to Berlin for the State Department. The chicanery that broke his heart. Why FDR ignored his counsel and why Under-secretary Welles hated him. A review by Theodore Draper.

AMBASSADOR DODD'S DIARY. *Edited by William E. Dodd, Jr. and Martha Dodd. Harcourt, Brace & Co. $3.50.*

To A William C. Bullitt or a Sir Nevile Henderson, the late Ambassador William E. Dodd was a freak, a ridiculous spectacle, a miserable failure. What to them was the damning evidence is all here in his own book. He was not ashamed of it.

He was a freak. One Thursday in June 1933, President Roosevelt offered him the highest diplomatic post in Berlin. Naturally, Dr. Dodd was astonished. He was not a rich man. He had contributed a mere $25 to the Democratic campaign fund in 1932. He was not a careerist, or more politely, a "career diplomat"; he had already almost completed his career as a distinguished historian and teacher. He was not a politician in search of a prominent resting place until the next election. He had no powerful friends, or worse yet, no close relatives, in the upper regions of the State Department's sacred bureaucracy.

Another man would have jumped at the offer and accepted it without a thought. But not Dr. Dodd. He was a strange one. In the first place, he was highly qualified for the job. He had studied in Germany as a student, he knew something of German history and international relations, he even looked back fondly at the old Germany of his youth. Secondly, he was anxious to finish his work on the Old South, which was only a book. This was odd. Sir Nevile Henderson has confessed that he never even looked into *Mein Kampf* until he was appointed British ambassador to Berlin. Lord Lothian also admitted that he did not read *Mein Kampf* until the Munich agreement shook him up a bit. As a general rule, therefore, ambassadors do not read important books, not to speak of writing them. But Dr. Dodd agreed to go to Berlin because President Roosevelt said: "I want an American liberal in Germany as a standing example." Dr. Dodd was that gullible. He believed it.

Once in Berlin, the Dodd freakishness was shown in many ways. His salary was $17,500 a year and he warned the President that he was determined to live on that income and not on a private fortune, which he did not possess. He felt that a principle was at stake. The financial oligarchy in control of the diplomatic service was obnoxious to him, as a democrat, as a plain, proud American. Of course, the other ambassadors were getting the same official salary, but they had none of his peculiar ideas. William C. Bullitt in Moscow, George H. Earle in Vienna,

William E. Dodd

John Cudahy in Warsaw, and the rest of that crowd spent no less than $100,000 or more in entertainment and dining. Dr. Dodd looked at them with contempt. "The further I go in my study of State Department policies, the more evidence there is that a clique of kinspeople connected with certain rich families are bent upon exploiting the Foreign Service for their set, many of them Harvard graduates who are not even well informed," he wrote. "Snobbery and personal gratification are the main objects with them."

In his work habits, Dr. Dodd was equally unusual. He actually came into his office at nine-thirty in the morning and worked through the day. His subordinates in the career service knew better how to conduct themselves. They came in anywhere between ten and eleven, hung around for two hours while clerks did their work, went out to luncheon and came back to the office at four, just in time to wait around for another hour or two before they went off to dinner or to an entertainment where they usually remained until twelve or one o'clock. Dr. Dodd had the curious idea that something was wrong with this practice, and he may have ruined some of the younger men for the rest of their lives by his insistence on a little more application to the job.

It was inevitable, in these circumstances, that Dr. Dodd should have made a ridiculous spectacle of himself on many occasions. He forgot his position and *walked* from the German Foreign Office to the American Embassy like an ordinary citizen. He thought that the proper hour to leave a party was ten-thirty. He hated the diplomatic affairs where hundreds of political and social climbers were brought together to impress each other. He went to them rebelliously and yearned for a quiet corner and some "good talk." Once, when he enjoyed himself immensely at a dinner given by Professor Hermann Oncken, the German historian, he made the following comment, an additional evidence of his extreme willfulness: "It was a challenge to any person of learning and the whole performance showed by contrast the emptiness of diplomatic dinners where no one feels free to say anything about the fields of history and literary criticism, because nobody knows history and literature and because no one trusts anyone else." A real ambassador would have been incapable of such a tactless distinction. Dr. Dodd just refused to learn, from the Japanese ambassador, for instance, who, as he himself noticed, "was very clever and also very careful. He talked much and said nothing." Or from Sir Eric Phipps, the British ambassador, who "was as non-communicative as ever."

This obsession of his for non-conformity sometimes interfered with his work. His French and British colleagues were overjoyed to bask in the light of the Nazi leaders. They talked like fascists in their presence. But Dr. Dodd gave himself away in this diary and we know how differently he felt. In March 1935 he disclosed: "I have an instinctive distaste of shaking hands with such men." In November of the same year this distaste was so strong that he acknowledged, "It is so humiliating to me to shake hands with known and confessed murderers." He meant Hitler and Goering and Goebbels. By February 1936 his horror was so acute that he would not see Hitler or Goering at any time of his own volition, and once, in February 1937, he sat across the table from Goering at an official reception given by Hitler to the whole diplomatic corps, but he could not talk freely to him because he could not forget the Reichstag fire and the blood purge of June 1934. Since it is axiomatic that capitalist diplomats are sent abroad to lie in the service of their country, Dr. Dodd was no diplomat if he could not even bring himself to forget the moral code on which he had been raised to believe that a murderer was a murderer in spite of his uniforms, his titles, and his power.

Because he was such a literalist, Dr. Dodd was constantly surprised and disillusioned. The ease and extent of American and British arms sales to Germany in violation of treaties and promises took his breath away. Hearst's deal with Goebbels outraged him.

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Ivy Lee's fortune of $20,000,000, gained by propagandizing for the fascists, was sad to contemplate. The rich German Jews who made their peace with Hitler by payment of millions of marks for a certificate of "Aryanization" were poisonous. Sometimes he wondered whether he or the rest of the world was crazy. In August 1934 Professor McMeyer of Boston University came to see him at the embassy and reported that a trip all through Germany had convinced him that the country was prosperous, the people were almost unanimous in their enthusiasm for Hitler and his regime, and the June purge was not bothering anyone. The new Germany was just as *gemuetlich* as the old. After he left, Dr. Dodd wondered: "Has he simply fallen for the Nazi propaganda and will he go back to Boston and argue for the strange medievalism which has escaped his attention? He is a Protestant preacher and teacher of naive mentality unless I myself am of strange and perverse mental traits!"

Dr. Dodd was equally incorrigible in his political estimates. As usual, he was lonely. The diplomatic corps as a whole was frankly sympathetic to the Italo-German intervention in Spain. He was not, just as frankly, but he had no faith in the western powers, either. The first mention of Spain in the diary comes on Aug. 15, 1936, less than a month after the outbreak of the rebellion. He wrote: "While I had not foreseen this immediate Spanish situation, I had forecast the German-Italian control of Europe in private reports to Washington. The events of last autumn pointed toward this outcome. Hitler's speech on March 7 [on the remilitarization of the Rhineland] was a master stroke in this direction. The failure of English-French cooperation against Italy in the Ethiopian conquest seemed to me to doom democracy in Europe. In these last weeks the Spanish conflict seems to offer another opportunity to Mussolini and Hitler. They can hardly fail since England is helpless and France so divided that a dictatorship seems unavoidable." This typical passage is a good example of his insight and his pessimism. Yet he had no doubt of the enormous stake. "In case the Spanish Republicans win the struggle there, the spread of dictatorships in Europe will cease, and Hitler and Mussolini will fall," he remarked in April 1937. Had he lived long enough, he might have added: "And the war would not have broken out in September 1939."

He was right on most other things. In a few months, he realized that a war for the possession of Europe and ultimately beyond was the major drive of the Hitler regime. He believed that the Franco-Soviet pact was one of the chief deterrents but feared that the British were doing all in their power to break it. He recognized the cruelty and viciousness of a Goering, whom Sir Nevile Henderson tried so hard to cultivate. On the other hand, his attitude toward the Soviet Union was rather negative. He abhorred the machinations of Bullitt but he did not show any positive friendship, or even much interest, in the Soviet system. In much the same way, he had lost all of his illusions about individual capitalists but he did not seem to move away from a general acceptance of capitalism as a whole. The result was that the rottenness and corruption in western Europe filled him with melancholy and weariness.

Dr. Dodd's attitude towards Ambassador Bullitt was typical of his personal relations. In 1934 Bullitt had passed through Berlin on his way to Moscow and was enthusiastic about the Soviets. In 1935 he passed through again, and Dr. Dodd was amazed by his turnabout. Bullitt calmly said that the Soviets "had no business trying to hold" the far eastern peninsula on which Vladivostok is situated, and predicted that Japan would soon grab it. Dr. Dodd replied: "You agree that if the Germans have their way, Russia with 160,000,000 people shall be denied access to the Pacific, and be excluded from the Baltic?" Bullitt answered: "Oh, that makes no difference." Next, Dr. Dodd learned that Bullitt had used his influence in Paris to prevent a French loan to the Soviet Union. Bullitt also had tried to defeat the Franco-Soviet pact of mutual assistance and worked for a Franco-German alliance. To Dr. Dodd, Bullitt's intervention was monstrous. He could not understand it when the Italian ambassador, Bernardo Attolico, who came to Berlin from Moscow, told him that "Bullitt had become attracted to fascism before leaving Moscow."

He could not understand it. He was amazed. He was indignant. If it was not over Bullitt, it was over some American capitalist or some other diplomat. Lord Lothian "seemed to be more a fascist than any other Englishmen I have met." Sir Nevile Henderson, who came to Berlin as Dr. Dodd was leaving, "is reported to be in full sympathy with the German-Italian aggression in Spain." Sir Eric Phipps, predecessor of Henderson, talked to Dr. Dodd as if he were opposed to Franco's rebellion and confided in a former German diplomat as if he favored Franco. For four and a half years, this hypocrisy and decay was his daily punishment. He could not take it.

So the State Department treated him like a miserable failure and broke his heart at the end. Under-Secretary Welles, who had winced at one of his criticisms of the career service, was his particular enemy. The circumstances of Dr. Dodd's retirement have never been explained fully, they were so shameful. In August 1937 President Roosevelt urged Dr. Dodd to return to Berlin for two or three months until he chose a successor and Dr. Dodd agreed to hold the post until March 1, 1938. Suddenly, on November 23, he received a peremptory cable from Secretary Hull to retire between December 15 and 31. The diary does not say so but it is known that Hull later denied that he had sent the cable. The guilty man was Welles and Dr. Dodd knew it. "When I saw the President and told him a little of

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what I thought of Under-Secretary Welles and his methods, no reply was made," he wrote. In fact, Dr. Dodd had a confidence in President Roosevelt which was never repaid. He told Roosevelt about the sales of American arms to Nazi Germany; nothing was done about it. He told Roosevelt about the Bullitt episodes; nothing was done about it. And Dr. Dodd's cup of grief flowed over when he was replaced in Berlin by one of Welles' favorites, Ambassador Hugh Wilson, as deadly an appeaser as Sir Nevile Henderson himself. Thus ended the sickening story which began so hopefully with President Roosevelt's statement: "I want an American liberal in Germany as a standing example."

William E. Dodd was a plain, rugged, honest American. He had no use for money or for power. His test for men was what they knew. He believed in an old-fashioned democratic faith and lived up to it even in little things. He saw through capitalists who did not have his own kind of patriotism. He loathed the diplomats for whom a mistake is worse than a crime, though, as it turned out, they committed both the mistakes and the crimes. For these reasons, he was a miserable failure. A Sumner Welles insulted him with impunity. President Roosevelt, whom he trusted, repudiated him. This was his immediate reward.

He felt the injustice deeply and it must have contributed to his death. Perhaps a more radical man would have reacted more lightly. The decadence of capitalism would have been less of a shock. But Dr. Dodd was not a radical, or to put it differently, he was not a radical of today but of Thomas Jefferson's time. His experiences were disillusioning, but he did not have the vision of a really different and better future. There is one sentence in his diary which tells better than anything else what happened to him. It was written on Aug. 29, 1936, in the middle of his stay in Berlin: "Nothing is more oppressive to a democrat, not a Democrat and also not a Communist, than the situation in Europe." He was painfully right. Lacking a revolutionary goal and insight, he could not help but be oppressed and nothing more by his experiences.

It takes time for a people to catch up with their William E. Dodds. The Nevile Hendersons are easy. Henderson was not a freak and a failure in Berlin. He came back to become a freak and a failure. The future will hold him up to shame and to ridicule. Dr. Dodd's destiny was exactly the reverse. If the editors of his diary had looked for a more exciting title for their book, *Failure of a Mission* could never have entered their minds. For Dr. Dodd, in the deepest sense, was not a failure. He read the future more clearly right than any of the other diplomats of the capitalist world in the Nazi capital or in any other capital. He held his ground bravely in the face of calumny and misunderstanding. In him, the old democratic faith found one of its rarest and truest sons.

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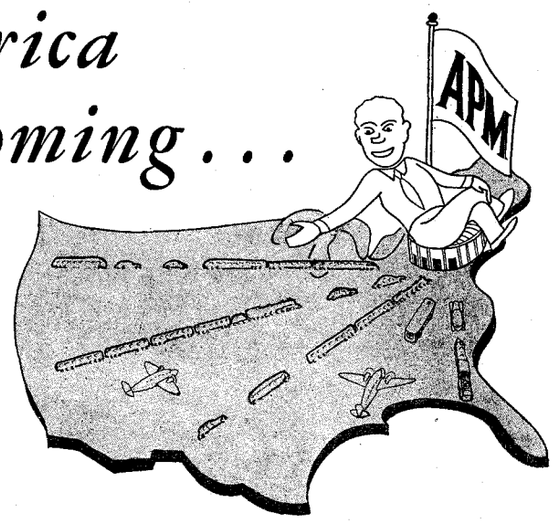

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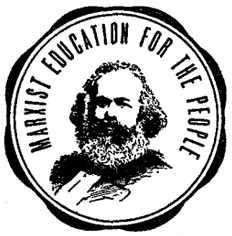

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Brief Reviews

BUREAUCRACY CONVICTS ITSELF, *by Alpheus Thomas Mason. The Viking Press. $2.50.*

PROFESSOR Mason's study is an interesting and keen-witted analysis of the sort of government bureaucracy which flourishes in capitalism's declining years. Using, as a clinical example, the well known Ballinger-Pinchot controversy over public lands during the Taft administration, Mason shows how public office is turned to the advantage of private interests at the expense of the general good.

The value of Professor Mason's study lies in clear and cogent documentation. Ballinger, Secretary of the Interior under Taft, sought to use his position to enrich friends and to add vast coal-land holdings to the Guggenheim enterprises. His designs were opposed by Pinchot and by a youthful field agent, Glavis. The controversy, "investigated" by a hand-picked congressional committee interested in whitewashing Ballinger, resulted (because of public pressure) in Ballinger's resignation. In the course of reviving the controversy, Mason makes it clear that the machinery of the capitalist state operates not in a vague public interest but rather in the specific interest of the ruling class. While the author does not give a class analysis of bureaucracy, discerning readers can see that the Ballinger case was only one of an endless number of "scandals" by which capitalist bureaucracy convicts itself of incompetence and unfitness to administer public office.

WHITTLING BOY: THE STORY OF ELI WHITNEY, *by Roger Burlingame. Harcourt, Brace & Co. $3.*

The life of Eli Whitney is an almost entirely neglected chapter of American history. To most people, mention of his name evokes a hasty thought of the cotton gin, and little more. Actually the cotton gin, which served to compensate the slaveholders for the declining importation of Negroes and helped them become a factor in the English textile industry, was only one of Whitney's accomplishments. By devising a technique for duplicating parts in the manufacture of metal goods, that is, by making possible interchangeable parts, Whitney hastened the development of mass production methods. The transformation of industry in the northern states in the early nineteenth century, from handicraft to factory production, owes much to Whitney's technical genius.

Mr. Burlingame's book is a fictionalized biography, based on original sources. Most of the dialogue is constructed from letters and diaries, frequently with painful results. The story, if one can call it that, is labored and naive, for what the author has done is to use his sources without evaluating them. The result is a novel with plenty of period atmosphere, but a hero who is presented as a very odd mixture of Horatio Alger and the Rover Boys.

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BIGGER THOMAS ON THE BOARDS

Richard Wright's great novel "Native Son" is successfully dramatized by the author, Paul Green, and Orson Welles. Canada Lee's splendid performance. Review of the movies and music.

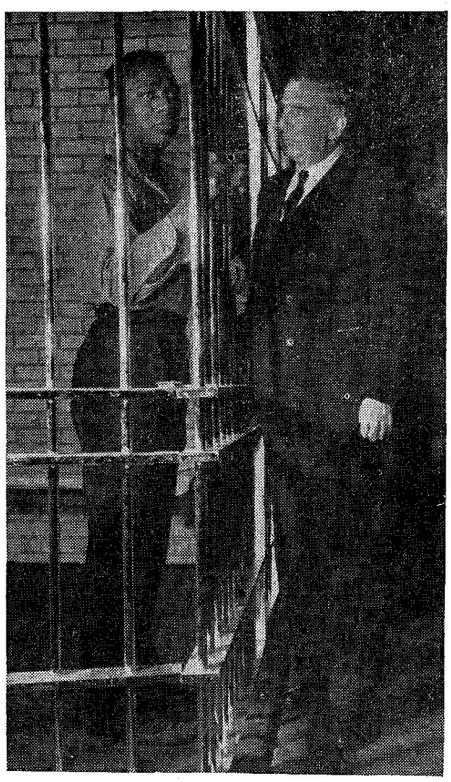
LIKE many other readers of Richard Wright's magnificent novel, I was a bit skeptical and troubled when I first heard the plans for a play-version of *Native Son*. The dramatic possibilities of the book were obvious, but even more impressive was the technical problem of translating the story into another medium without distorting its complex and subtle meanings. How easy it would be, by one fatal misstep, to convert tragedy into melodrama; or to reduce Bigger Thomas to a merely pathetic victim of circumstance on the one hand, a surly killer on the other; or to twist the social meaning of the story into its opposite, as some reviewers had attempted to do, by wrenching episodes out of their artistic context. The news that Paul Green and Richard Wright were collaborating on the script was reassuring. But another question remained. Would it be possible to find a producer who would dare to fight a Broadway theater which had so largely abandoned itself to the timidity, escapism, false patrioteering, and giddiness engendered by the war hysteria?

That these legitimate doubts have been so thoroughly dispelled by the production itself is a tribute to the integrity and skill of Paul Green and Richard Wright, of Orson Welles, Canada Lee, James Morcom, and all the others responsible for the imaginative staging of *Native Son*. For the play, like the novel, is more than a protest. It is a positive thrust against the conspiracy of bigotry, hate, and oppression which poisons our national life so deeply that we cannot be restored to health without its final and utter eradication. No sensitive human being can leave the theater without realizing, in the words of Paul Max, the defense lawyer, that the oppression of the Negro people, the criminal Jim Crowing of 15,000,000 American citizens, in the army, in the navy, in every walk of life, is a rotting sore in the national organism. To a theater long in the doldrums, *Native Son* brings a serious and bold conception which challenges the official view that it is unpatriotic to tell the truth about American life.

It is Bigger Thomas, of course, who dominates each of the ten swift scenes, whether or not he is physically present on the stage. Interpreted with great understanding and sensitivity by Canada Lee, Bigger comes to life as a major dramatic character, thwarted, rebellious, tormented by the alternating rhythms of fear and hate and pride. While it has been impossible to reproduce all the values of the novel's documented psychological insight, the dual and apparently contradictory aspects of Bigger's personality are faithfully presented: his tenderness and eruptive anger, his self-consuming uncertainties and his pretenses of unmitigated toughness, his moments of trembling hope rising from the depths of his being only to be smothered in a vast self-defensive cynicism.

In the very first scene, Bigger strongly rejects the philosophy of religious submissiveness preached by his mother. He refuses to praise God for the poverty and hunger and shame which haunt the tenement room in which the whole family lives. The enormous grey rat ("Mr. Dalton") which Bigger kills and dangles at the meager breakfast table symbolizes the enemy, wellfed, sleek, mean, and Bigger hacks away at him with awe-inspiring gusto. The play begins on this level of high tension—there are no small-talk preliminaries—and it keeps mounting as we follow Bigger and his friends in the street scene that follows. Imaginatively, they play at being aviators, politicians, soldiers, engineers, anything but terrified boys planning a hold-up because they have nothing better to do.

Breaking through the conventional three act mold, the authors develop Bigger's character in rapid and suggestive scenes: his introduction to the Dalton household, where he is quizzed by the detective, lectured to by his "philanthropic" employer, and terrified by the advances of Mary Dalton, the young university girl who fancies herself a radical; the unforgettable bedroom scene in which Mary is accidentally killed by a terrified Bigger; the scene in the furnace room where his crime is discovered; the highly dramatic moments in which Bigger makes his girl an accomplice in a kidnapping scheme and in which both of them hide from the police searchlights; and finally the stirring trial scene in which Mr. Max delivers an eloquent indictment against the real criminal, a social order based on discrimination, and the jail scene, where Mr. Max tells the boy: "They do not hate you. They do the same thing to each other; and not until all the poor people in the world gain confidence in themselves. . . ."



Canada Lee as Bigger Thomas and Ray Collins as Lawyer Paul Max in a scene from Native Son.

The play is a miracle of compression. In certain respects, indeed, it has gained over the original story. By reducing Jan Erlone (who had been imperfectly realized in the novel) to a nominal role, and by pointing up the character of Mary Dalton, the play clarifies the situation leading to Mary's death. Moreover, Mr. Max's trial speech is now more compelling in its firmness and simplicity, and one is not conscious, as one was in the novel, that it is a mere recapitulation of all the meanings already communicated.

In other respects, the play has sacrificed values which were powerfully felt in the original. The prosecutor in the play, for example, is a quite ineffectual figure; in the story District Attorney Buckley, running for re-election, on the lookout for sensational publicity, has seized on Bigger as a victim, and exploited prejudice for political ends. Because of the exigencies of the scene structure, characters like Bigger's mother, sister, brother, and friends, disappear after they are introduced, whereas in the novel they are brought back for effective contrast. The tie-up between Red-baiting and the victimization of Bigger, suggested here in the words of relatively unimportant characters like the detective and reporter, has only a portion of the social force which it had in the novel.

But these shortcomings are not central. To a great extent, they were probably inevitable. If the play is not as rich as the novel, if it is not as great a piece of dramatic as it is of narrative literature, one need not be surprised. For the story of Bigger Thomas was conceived and elaborated within the framework of fiction, and it is as hopeless for a play to realize all the values of

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a great novel as it is for a novel to realize all the values of a great play. All one can expect realistically, I think, is fidelity to the essential spirit of the original and independent vitality in the new medium. And the stage version of *Native Son* survives both tests with honors.

Orson Welles has treated the play with characteristic daring and flexibility. He has focused every scene on Bigger without destroying the other characters. He has been at great pains to give the effect of speed and concentrated action which the script required. James Morcom's sets are really distinguished for their variety and brilliant evocation of mood. Canada Lee is supported by a group of gifted and persuasively sincere players: Ray Collins as Paul Max; Evelyn Ellis as Bigger's mother; Nell Harrison as the blind Mrs. Dalton; Erskine Sanford as Mr. Dalton; and Rena Mitchell as Bigger's girl Clara.

It is reported in the press that MGM is contemplating a movie production of *Native Son*—with an all-white cast and the total elimination of the Negro theme! If this plan goes through, over three or four dead bodies, we shall witness a degrading contrast to the fighting play which Orson Welles has put on at the St. James Theater. It is to be hoped that the play will continue to win the cheers of a deeply stirred audience for many months to come. For its significance must be burned so deeply into the public mind that any subsequent Hollywood whitewash will be hooted out of existence.

SAMUEL SILLEN.

Rover Boys on Wings

Hollywood discovers a new flying technique

THIS reviewer has always considered herself fairly articulate, yet, face to face with *I Wanted Wings,* she feels the poverty of her vocabulary. All the words which describe it adequately are unprintable. Presented with enormous ballyhoo, it has an airplane and a recruiting station outside the front door for the purpose of signing up young men who are sufficiently impressed with the film's version of Air Corps life to make them want to enlist.

I Wanted Wings makes no bones about its intentions. It is a recruiting poster in style, sentiment, and static quality. If you imagine yourself compelled to stare at such a poster for two solid hours, you will have some idea of the entertainment value of this juicy offering. Indeed, the Air Corps has not got its money's worth, for, regarded solely as an inducement to enlist, the film is remarkably uninspiring, and its picture of the private life of student flyers is an insult to the service. Using the crudest of appeals, *I Wanted Wings* alternates uplifting pep talks with uplifted blondes.

A more flaccid script would be hard to imagine. Three Rover Boys are taken on a picnic through the Air Corps training school

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and emerge finally either as finished pilots or dead pilots. The flying field, meanwhile, resounds with kittenish laughter, and there is a blonde in every hangar. It is astonishing, indeed, how many women there are in the Air Corps (Hollywood version). They attend court-martials, they stroll across the field cheerfully snapping pictures of bombers, they stow away in airplanes. And they never wear any underwear, or much overwear for that matter.

The camera follows the chief blonde in and out of the army to her unfortunately belated death in a crash. As a story, *I Wanted Wings* is a limping affair; you find yourself looking closely at the screen to make sure the projector hasn't stopped. There are, of course, some extremely beautiful and intelligent airplanes, that contrast favorably with the human performers. There are also moments of humor, viz., a bucket of water is poured over Rover Boy No. 3.

Many better photographs of airplanes have been made in the past. The film's only importance is as war propaganda of unbelievable vulgarity and dullness, offered with smirks and the bland inattention of the Hays office. For this did the Air Corps lend its planes and flying fields; for this did they rush *The Great Dictator* out of the Astor Theater; for this did movie critics on the metropolitan papers sink to the new low of praising Miss Veronica Lake's acting. If Miss Veronica Lake ever puts on a brassiere, her acting ability will disappear. The entire cast, indeed, is marvelously inept.

THE PRODUCERS of *Topper Returns* seem to have decided, quite rightly, that ghosts have been worked to death. Consequently, they went through the junk yard and added several new elements to the latest Topper film. They borrowed the bilious housekeeper from *Rebecca,* a masked menace from the Shadow, and a mess of secret passages from the mists of antiquity. All these have been scrambled with Roland Young's engaging Topper and Joan Blondell's ghost, suitably attired in a singularly revealing negligee. (Even ghosts, these days, must have what it takes.) The result is hash.

Roland Young and Billie Burke labor nobly, and succeed in brightening the proceedings from time to time. George Zucco, one of the screen's suavest heels, leads a gang of villains who are thrown in just to thicken the soup. In spite of the able cast, the picture dribbles along in a feeble way from murder to murder, rising to downright offensiveness in the presentation of Jack Benny's Rochester as that old standby of bad movies, the Negro who's afraid of spooks. There is one brilliant moment, in which the police captain exclaims, "I ain't supposed to think. I'm from City Hall!" But the picture's story doesn't even pretend to jell; its trick photography has lost the charm of novelty, and I, for one, found it difficult to believe in the ghostliness of Miss Blondell's too, too solid flesh.

JOY DAVIDMAN.

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In the first portion of her program, which included some rarely heard pieces by the eighteenth century composers, Mateo Albeniz and Rafeal Angles, the Beethoven "Op. 109 Sonata" and a Scriabine "Sonata," it became apparent that matters like technique, phrasing, precision were axiomatic. It was in the second half of the program, devoted entirely to contemporary works, that Miss Bockstein was heard to best advantage. Here she demonstrated exceptional gifts of rhythmic solidity combined with the utmost ease and clarity in the handling of these intricate numbers. Bloch's "Poems of the Sea" was played with color and lyricism, while Prokofieff's five "Sarcasmes" were given spirited conceptions filled with humor and strength. The final piece, the Liapounoff "Lesghinka," usually avoided by performers because of its great difficulties, was performed with ease.

In general, especially in the first half, one could have wished for a greater degree of emotional abandon in the playing, such as Ray Lev showed in her concert earlier in the week. But Miss Bockstein left the impression of a highly intelligent pianist with unusual gifts for interpreting the work of modern composers.

VERDI was a great composer in his own right and the "Requiem Mass," released by Victor, is his maturest creation. To the musically sophisticated the "Requiem" may appear naive with its dependence on the aria and the almost melodramatic treatment of the thematic material. It is hardly a religious piece in the traditional sense. Actually it is an opera with an ecclesiastical libretto. And it is the opera of nineteenth century romanticism which was so busily preoccupied with the struggles of the individual human character. Free and rhapsodic in form, it tosses on minute subjective emotions and by sharp contrasts it violently alternates from mood to mood. Verdi melody was the kernel from which the entire musical structure grew, and in the "Requiem" it is the heart and nerve center. But it is also more than a treasure of melody. It is a genuine and sincere expression of a lyricist sensitive to the realest human emotions and possessed of an infinite capacity to realize them in music.

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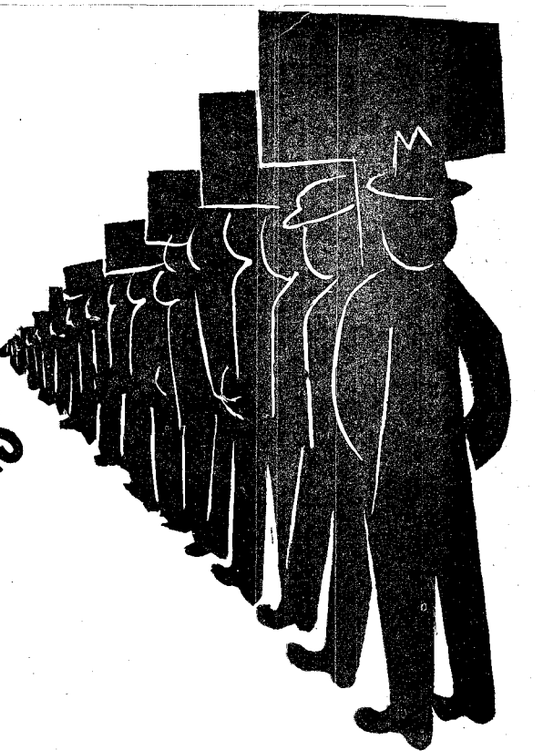

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